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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 7TH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 24 September 1991, at 3 p.m.

President:	Mr. SHIHABI	(Saudi Arabia)
later:	Mr. NYAKYI (Vice-President)	(Tanzania)
later:	Mr. ROGERS (Vice-President)	(Belize)

- Address by His Majesty King Mswati III, Head of State of the Kingdom of Swaziland

- Address by Mr. Amata Kabua, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands

- General debate [9] (continued)

Statement made by

Mr. Vayrynen (Finland)

/...

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- General debate [9] (continued)

Statement made by

Mr. Pinheiro (Portugal)

Mr. Nakayama (Japan)

Address by Dato' Seri Mr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia

Statement made by

Mr. Ka (Senegal)

Address by Mr. Fazl-Ul-Haq Khaliqyar, Prime Minister of the Republic of Afghanistan

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

ADDRESS BY HIS MAJESTY KING MSWATI III, HEAD OF STATE OF THE KINGDOM OF SWAZILAND

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): The Assembly will now hear an address by the Head of State of the Kingdom of Swaziland.

His Majesty King Mswati III of Swaziland was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the Head of State of the Kingdom of Swaziland, His Majesty King Mswati III, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

King MSWATI III: May I begin by saying how delighted I am to be back here at United Nations Headquarters, and how honoured I feel to have this opportunity of addressing the General Assembly. I bring with me greetings to you all from Africa, and in particular from Her Majesty the Indlovukazi and the whole Swazi nation.

Allow me to offer my congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your well-deserved election to the presidency of the forty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly. Swaziland is confident that your proven experience in international affairs, your outstanding diplomatic skills and undoubted leadership ability will ensure the successful outcome of deliberations on the vital issues we are addressing at this session.

My congratulations go, also, to the officers of the General Assembly for their election to office at the nerve centre of affairs in our Organization. Much rests on their abilities and skills, and we are confident of their success.

Mr. President, I would like to express my country's gratitude to and praise for your predecessor, Mr. Guido De Marco, who, together with his able

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colleagues, steered the affairs of our Organization so successfully. We are indeed indebted to him for his skill, diplomacy and leadership.

I am here today to renew Swaziland's pledge of commitment to the Charter and ideals of the United Nations. The events of the past 12 months have shown, perhaps more than ever before, the value of our Organization, and we take great pride in our membership and continued commitment to the ideals in which the hopes for peace in our world are placed. We extend the hand of friendship and congratulations to our seven new Members, and we welcome them to the one truly international family.

Our world is experiencing turbulent times. I doubt whether we have witnessed such global activity since the establishment of our Organization 46 years ago. Each new event has presented a fresh challenge to the effectiveness of our guiding principles. I am proud to say that we are meeting those challenges in the spirit of unity and cooperation on which the United Nations is founded.

No one event has taxed our effectiveness more than that which we faced in the Persian Gulf earlier this year. The situation demanded prompt action, and our Organization delivered it in a unified and cooperative fashion never before experienced in the history of the world.

We are witnessing the birth of a new world order in which the hopes, ideals and aspirations of all nations are growing ever closer, and which augurs well for future generations. The successes we have achieved would not have been possible without the inspiring leadership of our Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar. The demands on this one human being are enormous as the world looks to him for guidance in each new crisis. Swaziland salutes the qualities which have brought him such outstanding success, and we ask God to give him the wisdom and strength to continue in his endeavours

(King Mswati III)

For much remains to be done. Swaziland has followed with interest the course of events as they have occurred across the world over the past 12 months. Much we have applauded, but some matters give cause for concern.

I have already referred to the crisis in the Persian Gulf. We in Swaziland share the belief of all small countries in the principles at stake in that situation, and gave our full support to the United Nations resolve to bring about a swift and complete solution.

We commend the role of all members of the coalition in bringing about a fast and successful conclusion to the crisis. In addition, we applaud the actions of the people of Israel, whose restraint contributed in no small measure to the success of the operation.

Swaziland was deeply saddened by the toll of dead and wounded on both sides of the conflict. Let those who lost their lives act as our inspiration in our efforts to avoid such confrontations occurring again.

Of course, recent developments in the Gulf give renewed cause for concern. The obligations on all parties in the matter are clearly defined, and Swaziland fully supports the United Nations in its resolve to ensure that the region will not experience such disasters again. Let us pray that moderation, through compliance with our resolutions, will prevail.

In this regard, we also support the efforts being made to bring about a permanent resolution of the situation in the Middle East region as a whole. Swaziland has always advocated the use of the negotiating table as a peaceful means in the settlement of disputes. We are confident that such a course will bring about a solution acceptable to all parties.

(King Mswati III)

Europe continues to provide a focal point of global interest. It is extraordinary to think that in the two years since I was first privileged to address the Assembly the political map of Eastern Europe has been redrawn.

The inevitable teething problems of new nations and reformed ideologies are being painfully experienced, and Swaziland sympathizes with all who are suffering as a result. History tells us that nothing of worth is achieved overnight, and without suffering, and we ask God to give the strength to endure.

We are saddened to witness the violent events in Yugoslavia, as that most feared of all conflicts - internal civil war - grips that unhappy nation. All efforts to support a swift and peaceful solution to its problems must be encouraged. We look forward to a permanent and effective ceasefire and the use of dialogue to restore stability.

Swaziland is encouraged by the continuing process of arms reductions being undertaken by the United States and the Soviet Union. Our combined aim must be to rid the world of the menace of weapons of mass destruction, and we therefore applaud the commitment of both Powers in providing an example to other nations to take a similar view.

The failure of the unconstitutional attempt to remove the Soviet President provided an example of the unprecedented global cooperation we are experiencing these days. Almost universal condemnation of the actions of a few, who were attempting to enforce their will on the majority, helped restore stability and displayed the power of international unity.

Swaziland has been watching developments on the Korean peninsula with great interest and with hopes for an early settlement of disputes between North and South. We therefore applaud the President and people of the

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Republic of South Korea for their attempts at dialogue, encourage them and pray for their success.

Whatever success has been recorded in recent times - and there is much cause for self-congratulation for us in the United Nations - it is nevertheless painfully clear that much still needs to be done to redress the many imbalances so evident around the world.

As an African Head of State, I feel an enormous responsibility to put my continent's case, as our situation continues to worsen and the economic divide between North and South widens alarmingly.

The figures are there for all to see. Our poor growth rates, huge external debt and low output are just a part of the demoralizing story of Africa. The consequences, too, of war, natural disaster and social upheaval combine to project what could be seen as an entirely gloomy picture of our future, and threaten to cloud our vision as we attempt to find solutions.

Mr. President, you will be aware that I am here representing not only my kingdom, but also, as Chairman of the Eastern Southern African Preferential Trade Area (PTA) Authority, the 18 States and more than 220 million people who comprise our membership. The story of the PTA, and of the other regional cooperation organizations, holds the key to our continent's economic future. For the PTA was born out of a desire to improve the standard of living of all our peoples, not by relying on the charity of others, but by combining our resources and talents and finding our own solutions to our economic problems.

Our hope is that closer regional cooperation will reduce our reliance on the resources of a developed world which has changing priorities and new targets for assistance.

(King Mswati III)

I was reassured to learn on a recent visit to the European Economic Community headquarters in Brussels, and in meetings with World Bank officialsin Washington last week, that, for the time being at least, the developed world is not planning to sacrifice its assistance to Africa in favour of other recipients.

But to achieve true economic security our emphasis must be on self-motivation and self-sufficiency, to provide firm and lasting economic platforms on which we can build to give future generations the stability we have so far been denied.

(King Mswati III)

We undoubtedly need help to succeed; but, with the right support and unswerving commitment, we will succeed. An example of the type of assistance we require is embodied in the ideals underlying the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development. Despite expressions of good will and commitment made by delegations during the special session, positive results have so far not been achieved. We look forward to monitoring improvements in this programme.

We are of course aware that winning the economic fight is only one part of the battle. Africa continues to experience major social and political upheavals, many of whose effects are delaying the economic recovery of our continent.

On the positive side, we have been delighted to witness the accession to independence of Namibia, the cease-fire in Angola, the start of dialogue between rival factions in Mozambique and the reform process under way in South Africa.

The situations in the Horn of Africa, Chad and Liberia continue to give cause for concern, and we can only pray for swift conclusions of the problems and offer our support for their resolution by peaceful means.

Swaziland is of course watching the situations in Mozambique and South Africa with particular interest. Our country has always had a reputation for hospitality, and we have consistently followed a policy of non-aggression and the settlement of all disputes through discussion rather than confrontation.

We are currently playing host to approximately 75,000 refugees who have fled the problems affecting our friendly neighbour, Mozambique. This figure represents almost 10 per cent of our population, and clearly stretches our resources. We therefore applaud all efforts by the Office of the United

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Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to assist us in our task and indeed in all the other areas in which it operates.

Meanwhile Mozambique continues to be upset by civil war. While we are encouraged by the signs of dialogue between the rival factions, we would strongly appeal to this body to give more effective support in resolving this crisis. Too many Mozambicans have suffered from the unhappy situation, and that country deserves our help.

I should like to record Swaziland's support for the reform process currently under way in South Africa. We are convinced of the commitment of all parties to the reform process, and we offer our encouragement for a successful conclusion to the negotiations, with a blueprint for a new South Africa which will be acceptable to all.

We are not so naive as to believe that this process will be easy. We are already witnessing the problems associated with any radical change, and we are sad in our knowledge that these problems will not vanish overnight. But, equally, we are convinced of the necessity of change and confident that the South African people will find solutions which will cater to the aspirations of all groups and bring about a permanent end to the violence which has been a feature of life there for so long.

We in the region look forward to the full participation of South Africa in our various cooperation organizations. Much of the future success of our economic groupings depends on the involvement of our region's most influential country, and the welcome presence of representatives of all parties at our meetings indicates their willingness to participate in the future.

And, so, what of Swaziland? Our Kingdom continues in its peaceful way to tread the path of moderation. We have taken on added regional responsibility

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by accepting this year's chairmanship of the Preferential Trade Area Authority and the vice-chairmanship of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference. We take our commitments to these two influential organizations most seriously, as they give us the best hope for future economic stability.

Although tradition and our unique culture influence us strongly, we are not standing still. We recognize the need for change; not simply for the sake of change, but in order to adapt to changing circumstances and to benefit the majority of our people. Our priorities for action echo those of any developing nation, with education, health and employment chief among them.

We are blessed with a beautiful land, and we are determined to keep it that way. We fully support the United Nations initiatives to promote greater environmental awareness; already the Government has begun a process of information, so that Swazis can begin to appreciate what is required of them in their new environmental responsibility. I can assure the Assembly that we will be active in our participation in next year's conference in Brazil and energetic in our implementation of any recommendations.

Let me conclude by repeating that Swaziland is proud to reaffirm its commitment to the ideals of the United Nations. Recent events have given all of us good cause to be happy with our collective achievements and spur us on to tackle remaining problems with renewed vigour and determination.

I am personally privileged to have this opportunity to present the view of youth, and I will say that I am confident that the future of my generation is being very well served by the actions of this house.

(King Mswati III)

Let me express Swaziland's deep appreciation and admiration for the achievements of all who work for the United Nations in any capacity, as we pledge our continuing confidence in the performance of its many and varied roles throughout the world, in pursuit of the goal of international peace, stability and cooperation between all nations.

Thank you for your attention, and may God watch over us all.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the General Assembly I wish to thank the Head of State of the Kingdom of Swaziland for the statement he has just made.

His Majesty King Mswati III of Swaziland was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

The meeting was suspended at 3.40 p.m. and resumed at 3.50 p.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. AMATA KABUA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): The Assembly will now hear an address by Mr. Amata Kabua, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

Mr. Amata Kabua, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, His Excellency Mr. Amata Kabua, and to invite him to address the General Assembly.

President KABUA: Please permit me to extend to you, Sir, my warmest congratulations upon your election as the President of the General Assembly at this session. You have our confidence that your tenure will be marked with great success.

To you, Mr. Secretary-General, we wish to express our highest regard and admiration for your outstanding leadership, particularly during the recent crisis in the Middle East, whereby you were able to redefine and strengthen the role of the United Nations as the most appropriate peace-keeping force in the world.

I should also like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, to extend our congratulations and best wishes to the other six nations that have become Members of the United Nations at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

It is a singular honour for me to speak to address the Assembly today as the representative of a new Member State of the United Nations, the Republic of the Marshall Islands. One week ago my country's flag was raised outside

(President Kabua)

this noble edifice, joining the flags of the other Member nations. The past week has seen the fulfilment of one of my highest aspirations. I have been received with profound courtesy and consideration, for which my nation and I thank all the members warmly. We shall always be grateful.

When one searches for the Marshall Islands on large maps of the world, one may have difficulty finding them, for they are shown as mere specks. Those specks represent 34 atolls and coral islands with an average elevation of just over one metre, situated in the centre of well over a million square kilometres of the Pacific Ocean. The Marshallese people, about 45,000 all told, are descendants of the voyagers who came in canoes across the uncharted sea to find and settle our islands more than 2,000 years ago. In this remote environment with its temperate climate we formed our own nation and developed our own unique culture, which has withstood the test of time.

As was the case with so many nations in this Organization, the Marshall Islands experienced significant foreign contact during the nineteenth century, which in some ways forever altered the evolution and direction of our nation. During the past century we have experienced first hand the ravages of war and paid the high price of maintaining peace. We have been ruled by others while learning and developing the framework and institutions of modern democratic government for ourselves. We have maintained our culture and traditions while pursuing our economic development to better the quality of life of our people. In the end, these apparent contradictions have resulted in nothing less than a transformation of the Marshall Islands from an isolated, traditional Pacific island society into a modern nation-State now taking its place in this world Organization that is premised on the principle of sovereign equality for its Members.

(President Kabua)

Permit me to pause here for a moment to do something that my advisers tell me is not often done by nations whose sovereignty has been newly restored after a century of colonization: to praise our last colonial Administrator, which, as it happens, was set up over us by this Organization. The plain truth of the matter is that we could never have come so far as we have without the aid and encouragement of our former Trustee, now our good friend in a relationship of equality. I refer, of course, to the United States of America.

(President Kabua)

I wish to confirm that the Republic of the Marshall Islands binds itself to the principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations. My Government makes a pledge to conduct its affairs as a responsible member of this Organization. We earnestly and wholeheartedly enlist in the community of those who work to develop planetary loyalty as a complement to national loyalty.

The Marshall Islands has watched with great interest the events that have transpired over the past two years, and while we have not been a direct participant in these events we have none the less felt the impact of current world trends. While people may differ as to the long-term meaning of these events, two things seem to be quite clear.

First, as the founding Member States of the United Nations envisaged, there is an essential need for the United Nations to enable the nations of the world to collectively consider and deal with issues of international security. Although there will continue to be disagreement among Member States in this respect, the United Nations has also clearly demonstrated that it has both the potential and the ability to resolve international disputes and to maintain world peace.

Secondly, in terms of economic and social advancement and development, the United Nations is the only institution that can realistically deal with these issues on a global scale. The tremendous differences between the constituent Members of the United Nations - large and small, wealthy and poor - can be reconciled and coordinated only through the United Nations itself.

Indeed, it is perhaps this second point on the role of the United Nations that will pose the biggest challenge in the future. Since the Second World War and the founding of the United Nations the primary challenge has been to deal with issues of international disputes, security, politics, problems

(President Kabua)

associated with, and resulting from, the so-called cold war, and decolonization with the emergence of the new nation States. No doubt, many of these issues will continue to require attention, with the United Nations taking the major role in laying the necessary foundation for the maintenance of world peace and harmony. In the view of the Marshall Islands, the time has come for the United Nations to give greater and broader recognition and attention to the economic and social issues facing the nations of the world.

While issues of international security are inexorably linked to economic and social issues, the quality of life of mankind is, in the end, the most important and fundamental issue facing the nations of the world and this Organization. Consistent with national agendas and policies, people need the opportunity and the freedom to develop themselves. Their unimpeded efforts will invariably result in the desired progress and development of their respective nations.

Recognizing and confronting this most important of all tasks is the only way in which the world can have durable and lasting peace. This, we submit, is the biggest challenge facing the United Nations, and it is the fervent hope and desire of the Marshall Islands that the United Nations, through dedication and hard work, will be able to provide the requisite framework whereby mankind can truly improve his condition.

It is a difficult challenge, but not insurmountable. However, we must begin to meet it at the individual level. In this respect, I am reminded of a poem by an author who is unknown to me:

(President Kabua)

"If there is righteousness in the heart,
there will be beauty in the character.
If there is beauty in the character,
there will be harmony in the home.
If there is harmony in the home,
there will be order in the nation.
If there is order in the nation,
there will be peace in the world."

One issue that is fundamental to economic and social progress, as well as to our very existence, is that of the environment.

The problem of global warming - the so-called greenhouse effect - is a most formidable one. As I mentioned earlier, the Marshall Islands is a country comprising entirely low-lying coral atolls in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. It goes without saying that the consequences of global warming could be totally catastrophic for us, as well as for other countries similarly situated. Accordingly, we would make the following observations.

First, scientists throughout the world are not in accord as to the magnitude of the entire problem. Some have predicted considerable atmospheric deterioration, resulting in a significant raising of the sea level within the next several years, while others see the effects of global warming as insignificant for the foreseeable future. This lack of consensus on the subject is most disturbing, and leaves us in a quandary as to what the future may hold.

(President Kabua)

Secondly, there is very little, if anything, that one of the smallest and most isolated countries in the world can do to alleviate the problem, other than continue to raise it in the international community.

The Marshall Islands is cognizant of the uncertainties in this matter, as well as of the knotty issues to be resolved between the developed and the developing countries. We applaud the recent initiatives of the United Nations on the subject and fully support those initiatives. We are hopeful that through the efforts of the United Nations there will be consensus in respect of the extent of the problem, as well as a sound course of action to remedy, or at least allay, the effects of global warming.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands is fully aware of the great importance of providing a sound system of education for its people, and we have committed a great deal of our limited resources to the education of our population. However, we also feel deep concern about the educational level in our schools. We need better schools, but are hard-pressed to develop them through our national resources alone.

Nevertheless, we foresee that better schools, and a better start in life, can be realized in our islands through the globalization of education.

(President Kabua)

As I turn my thoughts homeward, I see a barefoot child sitting on a wooden bench or perhaps on a dirt floor in a one-room schoolhouse on a remote island. This child needs to be equipped with the necessary knowledge to be useful to his nation as well as to the world. In this context, through education there lie many of the answers to many of our problems.

I think of that child as summed up in an ancient Marshallese expression that is enshrined on our national seal, "Jepilpilin ke ejukaan", which conveys to us the idea that a child is a national resource just as is a sprouting coconut tree. Each must be nurtured as it grows. Each generation in turn enriches the soil for those that follow. If children and trees reach their optimum growth they bear fruit that will sustain, replenish and enhance the community, the nation and, ultimately, the world itself.

I believe that this allegory is salient to the concept of the globalization of education. As world-wide education takes place in the context of sharing and broadening existing knowledge, information and beliefs among the peoples of the world, we will in turn develop the necessary framework for succeeding generations by strengthening individual human development and the quality of life. In addition, we will have greater awareness of our commonalities and differences to better maintain world peace and order without the use of force.

In education, we see bright hope in the concept of the global village. Improved communications can make a remote little school a campus of a world-wide university using existing technology to provide interactive long-distance education. Students can ask questions, receive answers and debate issues across continents and oceans. We believe that cooperation

(President Kabua)

within the United Nations will play a dramatic role in bringing this dream to actuality within our lifetime.

Earlier I referred to economic and social issues as the biggest challenge that the United Nations is facing now and will be facing in years to come. In terms of economic development and trade issues, we note the tremendous differences and disparities which exist among the nations of the world.

As a very small developing nation, the Marshall Islands is aware of the recent initiatives and developments on economic and trade issues in the context of our own national development agenda.

Achieving economic prosperity at both the national and the international level is a difficult task and is an unending challenge for all mankind. Much of the economic progress of the world has been frustrated by political unrest and unreasonable barriers that often derail courses of action and interaction among nations. We are hopeful that the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations will be productive and successful.

Lasting peace and security among nations is the most fundamental underpinning for economic progress in the world. In this connection, the United Nations should be accorded much of the credit due in achieving the necessary peace and security to foster a healthier environment for economic advancement.

Since the Second World War, the nations of the world have advanced with greater experience and knowledge in technologies and economic strategies. Today, we see a greater interdependence among the nations of the world in matters of economic development. As we view it, the emergence of regional economic blocs is indicative of a new trend that has great potential through

(President Kabua)

further international cooperation; a trend in which new economic concepts and strategies are applied to achieve greater and sounder economic progress in all regions of the world. We are hopeful that the successful and full participation of all nations in the various regional economic blocs will eventually pave the way for the creation of a new and unified global economic system.

The Marshall Islands is taking some steps in economic development, which is essential to itself and which also may be beneficial to other nations. As our economy grows, we hope that our small nation can become a part of this trend in the sense of what we call "the Pacific way": that is, no nation should be left out.

Finally, I should like to touch briefly on the subject of current world events in terms of what is often referred to as the emergence of a new world order, particularly from the viewpoint of a very small nation such as the Marshall Islands.

As we seek to determine the meaning of recent world events in the context of historical trends, we must start by acknowledging that the world has never been fully at peace. The history of regional and world peace and attempts to bring about such peace is really, in essence, mankind's history of conflict and war. Peace exists when there is an absence of conflict or political, economic and social problems that form the basis for conflict.

To the extent that there is a discernible pattern to the history of world conflict it has throughout the centuries mostly been regional or simply man fighting with his immediate neighbours. Mankind lacked the technological ability to engage in a global conflict until this century, in which we have seen the waging of two world wars followed by a cold war that was premised on

(President Kabua)

building and maintaining giant arsenals as a deterrent in order to maintain world peace. Now, in the light of current world events we see that the likelihood of another world conflict has been greatly diminished with the United Nations truly taking its place as the premier organization for the maintenance of world peace. None the less, we are simultaneously witnessing a resurgence of regional and internecine conflict.

Does this mean that the world is returning to the past, or does it mean that we are ushering in a new era? I personally would very much like to believe that it is the latter, and that what the world is experiencing at present in terms of conflict represents the last convulsions in the process of attaining true and lasting world peace.

(President Kabua)

Over the last few years we have witnessed dramatic events which have fundamentally altered the political, social, economic and physical landscape of the world. These changes present us with the challenge and opportunity to re-examine the laws, institutions and values which have governed the relationships of peoples and nations. It is in this spirit that we offer some thoughts in respect of what is currently referred to as the new world order.

The formation of the United Nations some 46 years ago, with its vision of a new era of peace, human rights and international co-operation, brought great hope and promise to the world's peoples. Indeed, the United Nations has helped to usher in an unprecedented degree of international co-operation, mutual respect and understanding among the peoples and nations of the world.

However, at the same time, it has become increasingly evident that the available international machinery and processes need to be greatly strengthened to ensure peace and security in the world and to address newly emerging global issues.

Long-term solutions to the many issues facing the world will require a new and comprehensive vision of a global society, supported by a new system of values. This recognition does not imply the abandonment of legitimate loyalties, the suppression of cultural diversity or the abolition of national autonomy. It calls for a wider loyalty, for a far higher aspiration than has thus far animated human efforts. It clearly requires subordination of national impulses, needs and interests to the imperative claims of a unified, peaceful and prosperous world.

I wish once again to express heartfelt thanks and gratitude on behalf of the Republic of the Marshall Islands on the occasion of our accession to

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membership in the United Nations. We look forward to working with all of you, with the staff of the United Nations and with the specialized agencies.

It is an honour to be serving as an active Member of the United Nations, and as a full participant, in striving to meet the goals of the Organization and the challenges of the future.

Once again, Komol Tata - thank you very much.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Amata Kabua, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. VAYRYNEN (Finland): Mr. President, it is a real pleasure for me to see you presiding over our deliberations. I am sure that under your skilful guidance this session of the General Assembly will proceed smoothly and successfully.

It is heartening to note the significant increase in the membership of the United Nations. On behalf of my Government I warmly welcome among us the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands as well as the Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

In particular, Finland salutes the membership of its Baltic neighbours, with which we have now re-established relations and entered into close cooperation.

(Mr. Vayrynen, Finland)

The fact that the Baltic States have regained their rightful place among the independent nations reflects the profound change now under way. So far the most striking results of this change are visible mainly in Europe. However, this is a world-wide change and it has an impact everywhere. The divided world which emerged after the Second World War is now giving way to a new order.

The old power structures were founded on the outcome of the war and the military strength of the respective countries. The United Nations was created then to forestall the causes of future wars. Soon, however, the antagonism between East and West began to grow. The military alliances were established. The Soviet Union and the United States developed into military super-Powers. The power struggle between East and West extended all over the world and was entwined, as an essential part, in all major regional crises.

Along with the military antagonisms and the arms race, nations have been competing in the economic and technological fields. The nature of this competition has changed markedly during the past few decades. We have moved into an era of high technology and world-wide integration. This creates growing interdependence between nations, but also increases differences. Economically and technologically strong nations are able to become even more advanced and thus to increase their international influence.

(Mr. Vayrynen, Finland)

The old world order is passing into history, and a new one is emerging. In Europe, this has led from confrontation to co-operation. A new comprehensive European architecture is currently being worked out. In order to cope with new conflicts that emerge and to safeguard peaceful and democratic change, the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) will have to be strengthened. The basic principles of CSCE are solid, but its working methods and operational capabilities need to be further improved. We hope and expect that the CSCE follow-up meeting and the summit to be held in Helsinki next year will break new ground in this regard.

Tragically, in Yugoslavia, political ferment has led to increasing violence with potentially unsettling consequences for the whole of Europe. Finland supports the efforts of the CSCE and the European Community to stop the cycle of violence and to help find a political solution in Yugoslavia. United Nations support for these efforts is also vital.

Elsewhere in the world the new realities have facilitated the settlement of several regional conflicts. Namibia was set free. Apartheid is disappearing. Conflicts in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Central America and Western Sahara are being wound down. Even in the intractable Middle East there is a glimmer of hope.

The best example of the strengthened role of the United Nations is the liberation of Kuwait and the restoration of its independence. The Charter of the United Nations withstood a violent challenge to its authority. The Security Council acted promptly and effectively. The United Nations is and must continue to be actively engaged in alleviating the suffering caused by the Gulf War. This is true of humanitarian and other assistance, peace-keeping, as well as the elimination of Iraq's remaining weapons of mass

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destruction. Respect for international law and collective security remains the basis of protecting the security of all States, especially the smaller ones.

Side by side with these positive trends, global problems remain that have to be tackled. On the one hand, the economic and social problems of the developing countries continue undiminished. Poverty and want are increasing. Development prospects remain bleak. On the other hand, the Eastern and Central European countries, striving towards democracy, respect for human rights and a market economy, need and must be given economic support. Therefore, the developed nations must help solve these world-wide problems of development in a true spirit of global partnership.

The time has come to unravel the conflict that exists between the economy of man and that of nature. The tasks involved are not entirely contradictory; improved technology in the less developed countries can help achieve both a higher material standard of living and an ecologically sounder society. Yet, humanity must face the truth: the present trend leads inevitably to depletion of natural resources, climatic changes and serious damage to nature. We are endangering our own welfare and that of our children. If the present trend continues, the very existence of mankind will be in question.

The combined effect of environmental destruction, population growth and climate change can be both rapid and irreversible. The world has little time to change its ways. Therefore, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development must become a turning-point, the beginning of a process towards ecologically sustainable development. My Government hopes that the ongoing negotiations on global framework conventions on climate change and biodiversity can be concluded in time for the Conference. Another process of global negotiations that will, we hope, be initiated by the Conference is the

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framework convention on forestry. The livelihood of my own country is to a great extent derived from forestry and forest resources. Forests grow slowly, but can be squandered quickly. I speak from experience and with conviction when I emphasize the importance of forests in global resource management.

There is one cure for many environmental problems: forestation and reforestation. Forests provide fuelwood. Forests prevent desertification, floods and erosion. Forests protect cultivated land and shelter flora and fauna. Forests temper extreme changes in the climate and slow down more permanent changes. Moreover, forests absorb carbon dioxide.

All these environmental and developmental concerns, which have emerged during recent decades, present a formidable challenge to mankind. In order to meet this challenge we have to capture today the same sense of solidarity and joint responsibility that inspired the birth of nation-States. We have to incorporate into our political systems a new, global level. The world needs a new global architecture for human interaction, decision-making and cooperation. Such a new world architecture must take into account current realities. The responsibility for both development and the environment should be borne by nations according to the ratio of their power and wealth. The strongest economic Powers, which profit most from world-wide integration, should bear the main responsibility for helping those countries that do not have sufficient possibilities to succeed in this competition. Burden-sharing in financing, be it development aid or environmental investments, should be based not only on capacities in terms of gross national product, but also in terms of current account surpluses of national economies. Furthermore, we have to consider whether the share of financing for the environment could be based on the use of non-renewable natural resources and the damage caused to

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nature. Those countries that profit most should pay the largest share of the costs involved.

When conceptualizing this new architecture of global decision-making, we must also be ready to reform and strengthen existing structures for international cooperation. In this regard, reform of the United Nations system becomes essential.*

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* Mr. Nyakyi (United Republic of Tanzania), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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Therefore my Government welcomes the proposal by the Secretary-General, in his report on the work of the Organization, that a well-organized process of analysis and consultation be initiated in which Governments can outline their priorities for the achievement of their desired objectives for the Organization.

Let me in this context say that the Secretary-General's report is yet another manifestation of the lucid and thoughtful reasoning that the Member States have come to expect from him. His tenure at the helm of the Organization has added immeasurably to the effectiveness and prestige of the United Nations.

The reforms in the economic and social fields call for a new kind of division of responsibilities. This can be done without changing the democratic nature of the world Organization. The objective must be to maintain the United Nations in the forefront of development activities. With this in mind, the Nordic countries have undertaken a study called the "Nordic United Nations Project". It reflects the desire of our Governments, which provide about one third of the financing of United Nations development activities, to make the system more transparent, responsive and accountable.

Regarding humanitarian assistance, the structures and coordination within the United Nations must be clarified and strengthened systemwide. In order to improve the ability of the United Nations to alleviate humanitarian emergencies and environmental catastrophies rapidly, the concept of so-called United Nations Green Helmets deserves, in my view, closer study and consideration.

The capacity of the United Nations to maintain and restore international peace and security is of continuing concern to Finland. The clandestine

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pursuit of weapons of mass destruction and massive transfers of conventional arms are cause for growing and justified concern. These sources of present and future instability need to be addressed by the international community through strengthening non-proliferation arrangements and through novel approaches. Thus Finland strongly supports increased transparency in international arms transfers. The establishment of a universal and non-discriminatory register of such transfers under United Nations management is an appropriate and pragmatic way to begin.

Finland has consistently supported United Nations peace-keeping activities. We have long been one of the most important troop-contributing countries. We support the extension of United Nations peace-keeping into new fields, including that of the prevention of conflicts. We attach particular importance to strengthening further the role of the United Nations in the context of peace-making and peace enforcement. The strengthening of the United Nations peace-keeping role requires additional budgetary resources. I find it intolerable that the United Nations is constantly required to launch new operations without the certainty of full and timely financing from its membership.

The new and more effective role of the United Nations in this area is currently being studied by the Nordic countries, and we are actively engaged in formulating concrete proposals in this regard.

The United Nations was born to prevent war. That primary responsibility remains valid. However, five decades ago it was not possible to foresee how extensive the present and future problems of development and environment would be. When the Charter of the United Nations was formulated, nobody knew what role economic and technological developments would play and what effects they

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would have internationally. Now, as the Organization is approaching its fiftieth anniversary, there is ample reason for a thorough review of the challenges the United Nations is facing and of the adequacy of its structures and mechanisms, including the Charter, to respond to them. We need a new world architecture.

Mr. PINHEIRO (Portugal) (spoke in Portuguese; English text furnished by the delegation): First of all I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly and to express our confidence in your ability to ensure the success of this forty-sixth session. Our appreciation is extended also to the outgoing President, Mr. Guido de Marco, for the manner in which he carried out his mandate and for his contribution to reforms in the work of the Assembly.

The mandate of the present Secretary-General of the Organization is coming to an end. Portugal wishes to join all those who have expressed their deep appreciation for the dedication with which he has carried out his duties. This dedication has been decisive for the resolution of several crises and for the enhancement of the credibility of the United Nations as an instrument of peace.

The Charter of the United Nations has universal scope. Therefore, the admission of seven new countries is particularly significant because they enhance the representativity of this forum. I welcome the simultaneous admission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea - an important sign of the Korean people's aspirations to reunification. And I also stress the special significance of the membership of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, whose commitment to independence and to democratic institutions prevailed over more than four decades of illegal occupation.

(Mr. Pinheiro, Portugal)

We are living through a time of change. We can state today that we are in the presence of an overwhelming movement that does not spare even those regions and political regimes that seemed unchangeable. I cannot think of a better example than the one provided by the peoples of the Soviet Union, who championed the restoration of democracy and pluralism. I reiterate here the positions expressed this morning by my Dutch colleague on behalf of the European Community and its member States. The members of the European Community will do everything within their reach to contribute to the economic and social development of all central and eastern European countries, including Albania, to their great efforts toward democratization and economic reform.

Unfortunately, there is not just hope and optimism in Europe. Portugal is following with great apprehension the tragic developments in Yugoslavia. The spectre of civil war and the resurgence of exacerbated nationalism in a historically key region for the stability of Europe have compelled the European Community and the member States of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe to seek a negotiated solution to the internal differences opposing the peoples of Yugoslavia. We consider the escalation of violence unacceptable and we appeal to all forums and to international public opinion to support any efforts aimed at an immediate cease-fire and to negotiations based on good faith.

(Mr. Pinheiro, Portugal)

It is a permanent concern of Portuguese foreign policy that the European Community should not stray from its commitments to other continents. In Africa, a continent to which Portugal is linked by historical and cultural ties, there have been developments to which the international community should not remain indifferent. The efforts of an increasing number of countries to democratize their regimes, as well as progress in the field of human rights and the creation of market economies, deserve international recognition.

I point out the cases of Cape Verde and Sao Tome and Principe as remarkable examples of a process of political renewal. It is also in this context and in a very special way that Portugal salutes the Angolan nation. Peace in Angola is now a valuable fait accompli, and general elections, in line with the terms of the Estoril agreements, will take place next year. We are certain that with the active support of the international community all Angolans will be able to recover the time lost and rapidly transform their country into one of the major poles of development in southern Africa.

In this region of Africa, we continue to support efforts towards the building of a new South Africa, fully democratic and free from any form of discrimination. We welcome the measures already adopted to eliminate apartheid. We welcome too the dialogue that is being established between the main African forces. That dialogue will pave the way for a new South Africa.

We also hope that the conflict which has so deeply affected Mozambique will soon come to an end. We support without reservation all initiatives aimed at fostering a genuine peace in Mozambique. We are willing to offer our best cooperation to that end.

(Mr. Pinheiro, Portugal)

Portugal will make all efforts within the framework of the international organizations of which it is a member, and in particular within the framework of the European Community, to prevent assistance from the industrialized countries to other regions from reducing the flow of financial aid and investments intended for Africa.

Latin America is also moving gradually towards fuller compliance with the rules of democratic institutions and fundamental rights as well as towards new forms of economic integration and the strengthening of the market system. We reiterate our solidarity with the Governments that are pursuing these goals.

My country has a centuries-old history of friendly relations with this region, strengthened by the significant social, economic and cultural contributions of the Portuguese communities that settled in countries such as Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Venezuela.

I cannot but underline how important it is for the international community to sponsor programmes aimed at sustained and equitable economic development. We also favour creative and flexible plans to solve the question of the region's foreign debt, which continues to be a considerable hindrance to the progress and the future of its peoples.

Portugal has also been following with great interest the peace process in Central America, a region where the United Nations has played a major role in the search for a negotiated solution to questions that are vital to the stability of the countries involved.

In this context we hope that current efforts will lead to true national reconciliation in El Salvador and in Guatemala. Within a framework of dialogue and cooperation, we hope that the eighth meeting of the San Jose conference, to be held in Lisbon, will give a significant impetus to real and harmonious progress in the region.

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The dramatic changes and emerging trends we have been witnessing on the international scene give us reason to believe that the right of the people of East Timor to freedom and self-determination will not be forgotten after more than 15 years of illegal Indonesian occupation carried out by the use of force and in blatant disregard of the basic principles of the Charter and the resolutions of the both General Assembly and the Security Council, which have yet to be implemented.

One of the main lessons we can draw from the developments we are currently witnessing - the restoration of the rights of self-determination and independence of the Baltic States and the rejection of the illegal occupation of Kuwait - is that situations based on the suppression of the legitimate rights of peoples and of their cultural, social and linguistic identity are inherently fragile and are bound to fail. While the last of the Non-Self-Governing Territories are being led to the final stages of their decolonization processes - and I recall in this context the recent accession to independence and admission to the United Nations of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands, both situated in the Pacific region and, like several other Member States of the United Nations, much smaller and less populous than East Timor - regrettable anachronisms still persist in East Timor in the last decade of the present century, a decade proclaimed by the United Nations as devoted to the eradication of colonialism.

In the case of East Timor - a Non-Self-Governing Territory for which Portugal is still responsible as the administering Power recognized by the United Nations - fundamental principles are at stake. The defence of those principles has been a determining factor in some of the most significant

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actions undertaken by this Organization and, in particular, by the Security Council. I am referring to the principles of the non-use of force and the inadmissibility of illegitimate military conquest as an acceptable claim for territorial enlargement; respect for the right to self-determination of colonial peoples; and upholding the basic human rights and freedoms of both peoples and individuals.

We are convinced that the international community as a whole, and the United Nations in particular, should be involved in a more consistent and committed manner in the search for a political settlement of this question based on respect for the principles I have just mentioned. In fact, it is those principles that are at stake in East Timor, and not an alleged bilateral dispute between Portugal and Indonesia. The last 15 years have proved that widespread repression and the use of force have not been able to consolidate the illegal status quo imposed upon the Territory. They have rather prompted the East Timorese people to a stubborn and undaunted resistance and to a protest movement that very few would have ever dared anticipate.

Portugal, living up to its responsibilities, has been systematically drawing the international community's attention to the seriousness of the situation prevailing in East Timor and to the need to bring it to an end through the free exercise of the right to self-determination and through respect for the human rights and identity of the people. We have also cooperated closely with the mediation efforts of the Secretary-General. Under his auspices, an agreement was recently reached between Portugal and Indonesia on the terms of reference for a proposed visit to East Timor to be undertaken soon by a Portuguese parliamentary delegation in order to obtain first-hand information on the situation.

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We hope that this initiative will lead to the resumption of a real dialogue involving all parties legitimately concerned and contribute to increased awareness by the international community of the need to solve that problem in accordance with the universally accepted principles that the United Nations has the mandate to promote and defend.

The European Community declarations of Venice and Madrid constitute solid reference points for Portuguese foreign policy regarding the Middle East; in our view, respect for international legality - in particular Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) - should guide all parties involved.

In this context we support the initiatives of the United States Administration based on a full commitment and a profound knowledge of the nature of the conflict. We call on the parties involved to take advantage of this historic opportunity.

Portugal, a country with historical and cultural links with northern Africa, has been giving its support to the pioneering integration initiatives of the Arab Maghreb Union, which have greatly contributed to cooperation with Europe and to strengthening dialogue in the Mediterranean.

I wish now to address briefly a few issues that, because of their significance, have increasingly become the focus of attention in the United Nations and, naturally in my country.

I shall refer first to the preservation of the environment. The issues to be discussed in this area concern Governments and citizens, and industrialized and developing countries. The environmental policies established now will ultimately determine the inheritance of future generations. We must not fail in this endeavour.

(Mr. Pinheiro, Portugal)

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development that will take place in June of next year in Rio de Janeiro deserves special mention. Portual hopes that at the Conference all participants will pledge their firm political commitment to enable a rational exploration of natural resources and alleviate the damaging effects of environmental degradation.

In the human rights field, Portugal reaffirms its commitment to the cause of the immediate abolition of capital punishment, consistent with the positions that we have put forward in various forums, namely, within the framework of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the Council of Europe and the United Nations. We welcome the recent entering into force of the Second Additional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which aims at the abolition of capital punishment. We appeal for the timely ratification of this instrument, whose geographical implementation is, unfortunately, still limited.

Portugal joins the overwhelming majority of countries in their concern for the tragic situation faced by victims of natural disasters and conflicts over which, in most cases, they have no control. The solution to these situations must be provided by a better coordination of existing humanitarian aid mechanisms.

Therefore, we hope that the Assembly will take into account the initiative of the States members of the European Community on emergency humanitarian aid and will approve a resolution on this issue. This is an instance where solidarity among the various countries and the United Nations can alleviate the suffering of millions.

(Mr. Pinheiro, Portugal)

To conclude, I should like to state the Portuguese position regarding the responsibility that the Member States should have in the future activities of our Organization.

The developments I have been mentioning are raising expectations in world public opinion. Most answers can be found within the framework of the United Nations. In fact this forum is going through a crucial period of its history and for the first time, owing to the considerable easing of international tensions, is in a position to address pending issues related to the essential objectives of the Charter.

Portugal urges all Member States to participate actively in this task and stresses that the United Nations of tomorrow will constitute a forum where the problems and conflicts still besetting the globe can be discussed freely, without any restriction.

This is a challenge for all of us, as we share the common responsibility of eliminating the deep political, social and economic imbalances that continue to affect the peoples of this planet, particularly in the context of North-South relations.

Only in an integrated way and through dialogue and international cooperation will it be possible to overcome the difficulties and roadblocks that affect the international community. Portugal will do everything within its power to achieve these goals. It is in this spirit that we are participating in the present session of the General Assembly. It is also in this spirit that we look forward to undertaking the presidency of the European Community in 1992.

Mr. NAKAYAMA (Japan) (spoke in Japanese; English text furnished by the delegation): I should like first to extend my heartfelt congratulations to His Excellency Mr. Samir Shihabi upon his election as President of the

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General Assembly at this historic forty-sixth session. I am pleased also to have this opportunity to express my respects and appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Guido de Marco for the very able manner in which he presided over the forty-fifth session.

On behalf of the Government and the people of Japan, I wish to extend a hearty welcome to the countries that have been newly admitted to United Nations membership: the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia and the Republic of Lithuania. With these seven new Member States and with the Cambodian Supreme National Council occupying its country's seat, I am glad to see the Organization's enhanced universality at the very time when the United Nations may be expected finally to attain the high ideals held for it since its founding.

Lastly, I wish to pay a high tribute to the Secretary-General for the important contributions he has made for world peace.

In a span of just two years the world has undergone a historic change with the end of the cold war and with the Gulf crisis. The international community is thus in a historic time of transition as efforts are being made to fashion a new world order. Now, as the world moves from confrontation to cooperation, tremendous possibilities are opening up for human progress.

This shift has provided new impetus for the resolution of regional issues through dialogue. It is clear that the process of bringing an end to the Gulf crisis has had a favourable impact on progress towards the peaceful resolution of conflicts in the Middle East, Cambodia, Western Sahara, Angola, Central America, Afghanistan and elsewhere. Prospects for the future are bright in

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Europe as well, with the 1992 integration of the European Community and its link-up with the European Free Trade Association, and the return of the East European States to the European fold.

At the same time, however, it must be recognized that the world is beset by the uncertainty and instability common to any time of transition. There is also the danger that religious, ethnic, territorial and other disputes may resurface as the cold war structure is dismantled. The Gulf crisis was resolved through the resolute action of the international community, and it is essential hereafter that we fully understand the characteristic features of this time of transition and respond unerringly. In this respect, Japan is profoundly concerned about developments in Yugoslavia and supports the efforts of the European Community and others to mediate a peaceful resolution to that conflict.

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The situation that is emerging in the Soviet Union is one of historic transition toward the universal values of freedom and democracy as we approach the twenty-first century. Home to three-fourths of the Earth's population, many of the world's developing countries continue to suffer from the problems of grinding poverty, sluggish growth, burgeoning debt and population growth. It is the responsibility of the international community to work for sustained development in these countries.

In addition, with increasing interdependence, humankind is faced with a spate of problems, such as those concerning the global environment, refugees, drugs and terrorism, which no one country or region can solve on its own but for whose solution we must all join together, on the basis of the realization that the world is one. At this historic time of transition, each country throughout the world is called upon to forge a new approach appropriate to the new era, and then all must work together in a shared effort to create a new world order.

With a sense of sincere contrition over the past war, the Japanese people are resolutely determined never again to become a military Power. In the more than 40 years since the Second World War, while striving to attain the level of development that it enjoys today, Japan has worked tirelessly, through a wide range of economic and other exchanges, to translate into actual policies the philosophy of living, and the resolve to live, as a nation of peace.

In considering the circumstances that enabled Japan to achieve its present prosperity in an international climate of peace, I believe that the new international order that we seek must be one that strives, first, to ensure peace and security; secondly, to respect freedom and democracy; thirdly, to guarantee world prosperity through open market economies;

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fourthly, to preserve an environment in which all people can lead rewarding lives; and, fifthly, to create stable international relations founded upon dialogue and cooperation.

These goals are basic tenets of Japanese policy and are consistent with the purposes of the United Nations as set forth in its Charter. In this new era of collaboration and cooperation, the United Nations will be expected to play a central role in surmounting the many challenges facing the international community. This view was also expressed in the Political Declaration of the London summit.

Dedicated to peace in full recognition of its past experiences and cognizant of the global responsibilities that accrue as a result of its economic strength, Japan has a historic mission to make the maximum possible contribution to our common efforts to achieve the goals of the new world order.

The international community coalesced magnificently around the United Nations in response to the crisis in the Gulf. Japan, too, extended maximum cooperation to the efforts of the countries concerned to restore peace to the Gulf and to the front-line countries hard hit by the economic dislocations resulting from the war. As a result of Japan's participation in this international response to the blatant challenge to the rule of law and the violation of peace, there developed among the Japanese people a heightened awareness that, as a peace-loving country, Japan has an obligation to contribute actively to efforts led by the United Nations to secure and maintain world peace. Accordingly, after the cease-fire Japan dispatched to the Gulf region Japanese disaster relief teams to address environmental problems and to provide refugee relief, and also dispatched minesweepers to ensure navigational safety in the Gulf.

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Although a cease-fire is in effect, numerous problems remain, including the questions of establishing international borders, of monitoring the cease-fire, of settling the reparations issue, and of eliminating Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. The resolution of these issues has been entrusted to the United Nations. It is essential that Iraq faithfully comply with all Security Council resolutions so as to facilitate their smooth and prompt implementation, and that it cooperate with the work of the Special Commission on the destruction of weapons of mass destruction. Likewise, recognizing that all Member States have an obligation to support these tasks of the United Nations actively, Japan will continue to be unstinting in its support.

The Gulf crisis is past, but for the sake of long-term regional stability, it is essential that remaining issues, such as the problem of peace in the Middle East and the security of the Gulf, be resolved. This will require the active involvement of the international community as a whole, respecting the initiatives and wishes of the countries in the region. Through the efforts of the United States and the Soviet Union, progress is now being made towards holding an international conference on peace in the Middle East, and we very much hope that all of the parties concerned will strive to conduct these negotiations flexibly and realistically and that they will succeed in their shared endeavour.

Japan intends to intensify its dialogue with the parties concerned and to extend all possible and appropriate cooperation to efforts to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace, in line with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

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There are a number of lessons to be learned from the Gulf crisis. The first of these is that once armed conflict erupts it inevitably causes tremendous human suffering and takes vast amounts of human and material resources to resolve. From this it is clear that conflict prevention is a matter of special urgency and deserves highest priority. If the United Nations is to be able to engage effectively in preventive diplomacy, it is essential that the Secretary-General, the Security Council and the General Assembly each function effectively within their realms of responsibility.

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In an effort to add substance to the draft declaration on fact-finding by the United Nations that has been submitted at this session of the General Assembly, and to enable the Secretary-General, with the support of the Security Council and others, to move vigorously at a very early stage to prevent conflict, Japan would like to propose the establishment of a conflict-prevention system based on the following measures.

First, the Secretariat's ability continuously to monitor and analyse information relating to possible conflicts should be substantially strengthened. Secondly, on-site fact-finding missions should be dispatched. Thirdly, early warnings should be issued as the situation requires. Fourthly, good offices and mediation efforts should be undertaken under the authority of the Secretary-General. Japan hopes to work together with other Member States during this session of the General Assembly for the early establishment of an effective system for conflict prevention.

The second lesson to be learned from the Gulf crisis is that the amassing of massive arsenals by one country through the international transfer and proliferation of weapons contributes to aggressive behaviour when such actions are tied to that country's political aims. Thus, the most important issue in the wake of the Gulf crisis is that of strengthening efforts in the fields of the international transfer of conventional weapons and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles. This is an area in which Japan has long taken active initiatives.

There is an urgent need to establish a United Nations reporting system that would enhance the transparency of such international transfers of conventional weapons. Japan has advocated the establishment of just such a system since March of this year. Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu announced at the Kyoto Conference on disarmament issues in May that Japan would be

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submitting a draft resolution to this effect to the General Assembly at this session. At present, we are consulting with the countries of the European Community and others concerned, and are hard at work drafting this draft resolution. Given the importance of establishing such a system as soon as possible, I very much hope it will find wide support throughout the General Assembly.

Recognizing that there may be some technical issues involved in ensuring that such a system operates smoothly, we are prepared to cooperate with the United Nations in hosting a meeting next year in Japan to elaborate these issues. Likewise, should the need arise, we are also prepared to offer appropriate cooperation to enhance the database capabilities of the Department for Disarmament Affairs for the implementation of this system.

As the only country to have suffered the devastation of atomic weapons, Japan is working for the ultimate abolition of all nuclear arms and has proposed a step-by-step approach to the cessation of nuclear testing. I pay a high tribute to the United States and the Soviet Union for having concluded the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty this year. I hope that still further efforts will be made towards nuclear disarmament. At the same time, I would point out in regard to the current situation in the Soviet Union that the international community very much hopes that that country will ratify and fulfil its treaty obligations in the field of arms control and will maintain the strictest control over its nuclear arsenals.

Furthermore, it is very important that the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) gain greater universality, and I have long called upon all countries that have not yet done so to accede to this Treaty. I am sincerely gratified by France's decision to sign the NPT; by China's announcement, during Prime Minister Kaifu's recent visit, of its intention to become a party

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to it; and by South Africa's accession to it. I very much hope that France, China and all other countries that have not yet done so will become parties to the NPT promptly and that the Treaty will be extended well beyond 1995.

In order to strengthen the NPT, it is also important to reinforce and improve the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and for this purpose Japan has proposed a system which includes the use of special inspections. It is deplorable that there is still a country that is a party to the NPT but has not yet concluded a safeguards agreement as called for by the Treaty, and I hope that this situation will be rectified as soon as possible.

On the question of chemical weapons, as I stressed in the statement I delivered at the Conference on Disarmament in June of this year, it is important that the negotiations on the chemical weapons convention be concluded at the earliest possible date, before we lose the momentum provided by the Gulf crisis. There is very little time until the mid-1992 deadline and I hope the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva will continue its work even while the General Assembly is in session. The position of Japan on the question of missiles was set forth in its appeal at the Tokyo Conference on the Missile Technology Control Regime this March, and it is hoped that all countries will adopt the Regime guidelines.

The Gulf crisis demonstrated anew how very important it is that conflicts be resolved peacefully through international cooperative efforts led by the United Nations. At the same time, it made the world aware once again of the importance of United Nations peace-keeping operations to ensure that a cease-fire once established is not breached. In today's changing world, the peace-keeping operations are an increasingly important and indispensable activity for promoting the resolution of regional conflicts, and it is

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expected that they will be further activated in the months and years ahead. Enhancing their function and authority will require broader participation in terms of personnel from the United Nations membership and a more stable financial base.

So far, Japan has sought to buttress the peace-keeping operations by voluntary contributions to start-up costs and by subscriptions to the trust fund for such operations. Further, the Government of Japan has just presented to the National Diet a bill that would put in place new domestic arrangements enabling Japan to strengthen its contribution to efforts for world peace in terms of personnel while continuing to extend financial cooperation.

The wave of reform under way in the Soviet Union gives us hope that it may be possible to develop a new cooperative relationship with that country in the context of the new international political and economic order. Japan sincerely welcomes the historic changes taking place in the Soviet Union, and intends to work to develop a new relationship based upon the following principles.

First is the principle of strong support for, and solidarity with, the total thrust of the reforms in Soviet domestic and foreign policy and of enhancing and expanding appropriate and effective assistance.

The second is that of dramatically strengthening and enhancing multifaceted cooperation with the republics, especially our neighbour, the Russian Republic. In this connection, Japan very much appreciates the view expressed by the leadership of the Russian Republic that the distinction between victor and vanquished has no place in the creation of the new world order, and hopes to strengthen new cooperative relations along these lines.

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The third is that of expanding appropriate cooperation so that an open Soviet Union can be accepted as a truly constructive partner in the Asia-Pacific region.

The fourth is that of actively supporting expanded cooperative relations of the Soviet Union with international economic organizations, including a special association with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, so as to integrate the Soviet Union into the world economy.

The fifth and most important is that of concluding, in line with the principle of law and justice, as emphasized by the Russian Republic, a peace treaty between our two countries by way of resolving the territorial issue at the earliest possible time and hence effecting a fundamental development in our bilateral relationship. Japan is confident that such a dramatic improvement in Japanese-Russian and Japanese-Soviet relations can make a creative contribution to the structuring of the new world order that we all desire.

There are still a number of unresolved conflicts and disputes in the Asia-Pacific region. As an Asian-Pacific country itself, Japan is pursuing an active foreign policy so as to create an international order for ever free of confrontation and division.

In this sense, the fact that South Korea and North Korea have joined the United Nations simultaneously at this session is an event of historic significance, and one we welcome as heralding peace and the relaxation of tensions on the Korean peninsula. I very much hope that South Korea and North Korea will continue to work for peaceful unification through direct dialogue in keeping with the principles of the United Nations Charter. Thus I

(Mr. Nakayama, Japan)

appreciate the constructive proposal for peaceful unification which President Roh Tae Woo made in his statement this morning. For its part, Japan has been engaged in negotiations since the beginning of this year for the normalization of its relations with North Korea, and intends to continue to negotiate in good faith so as to contribute to peace and stability on the peninsula.

There is at long last good cause for optimism that a comprehensive settlement may be achieved in Cambodia. Recognizing that the promotion of dialogue among the Cambodian parties themselves is the most important factor for peace in that country, Japan has undertaken a number of diplomatic initiatives, including the hosting of the Tokyo meeting on Cambodia last year. We thus sincerely welcome the recent progress made by the Supreme National Council under the leadership of His Royal Highness Prince Samdech Norodom Sihanouk. Japan very much hopes that the Paris Conference on Cambodia will be reconvened at the end of October, that lasting peace will be attained with appropriate United Nations involvement and that vigorous nation-building efforts in accordance with the will of the Cambodian people will begin as soon as possible.

Japan also welcomes the rapid progress that is being made to bring about domestic reforms in South Africa, including the abolition of the legal foundation of apartheid. We hope that discussions for the drafting of a new constitution will commence soon. Japan is ready to support the efforts of all parties concerned for the establishment of a free and democratic society without racial discrimination in South Africa.

Turning to the situation in Afghanistan, Japan welcomes efforts to achieve a political settlement, including the Secretary-General's five-point proposal and the agreement by the United States and the Soviet Union to end

(Mr. Nakayama, Japan)

their arms shipments to combatants there. Japan continues to support the tireless efforts for peace of all the parties concerned.

Many of the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America are beset by increasingly grave economic and social difficulties. It is vitally important for all the world that development be promoted and prosperity achieved in those countries. With the threat of nuclear war having receded and ideological conflict being a thing of the past, this is now the international community's most important responsibility.

It is essential that we support those developing countries that are making self-help efforts for economic reconstruction and development in close consultation with international organizations, and it is especially imperative that the necessary financial resources, including resources from the private sector, be made available by the industrialized countries. Japan is working to enhance its official development assistance under its Fourth Medium-Term Target, and it is also steadily implementing its capital recycling programme.

In view of the special needs of the least-developed countries, Japan cooperated with the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) to host the Least-Developed Countries Tokyo Forum this May to study ways to deal with their problems. In an effort to widen further the loop of cooperation, Japan is planning to convene in Tokyo in 1993 a summit-level African development conference to address the problems of African countries.

The maintenance and strengthening of the free and multilateral trading system is indispensable to world economic development, and the successful conclusion of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) Uruguay Round is both the most important issue facing the world economy and a priority foreign policy issue for Japan. Japan intends to cooperate with the other

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countries concerned in making every possible effort to conclude the Uruguay Round by the end of the year.

As a prerequisite to sustained prosperity, it is most urgent that we work to resolve the many global environmental issues threatening the very survival of the human race and to create a world more congenial to human life. However, threats to the world environment, global warming, depletion of tropical forests, destruction of the ozone layer and encroaching desertification have grown more serious in recent years.

During this International Decade for Natural of Disaster Reduction, which commenced last year, it is essential that we redouble our efforts to prevent and mitigate natural disasters.

Resolving these global environmental issues will require that people everywhere transcend the barriers that separate them and work together.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held next year is an important opportunity for all countries to join together and agree on ways of ensuring a congenial environment for the future. As an industrialized Asian nation, and one that has managed to reconcile the dual demands of development and the environment, Japan hopes to contribute to building a cooperative framework for industrialized and developing countries, and is determined to take active initiatives for the success of this Conference. It is also from this position that we intend to continue to play an important role in the negotiations for the framework convention on climate change.

Hoping to support the upgrading of developing countries' ability to deal with the need for environmental conservation, Japan intends to continue to implement vigorously its development assistance, including the establishment

(Mr. Nakayama, Japan)

of the United Nations Environment Programme International Environmental Technology Centre in Japan and its support for the sustainable management of tropical forestry resources through, for example, the International Tropical Timber Organization.

(Mr. Nakayama, Japan)

Creating a world in which human values are respected and people everywhere can lead lives of dignity is beyond the capabilities of any single nation and is truly a task for all humankind. As the first step in creating such a world, it is essential that the fundamental human rights of everyone be guaranteed, and that all people be enabled to exercise their God-given abilities. Believing that respect for human rights is a universal value and the foundation of world peace and stability, Japan is making an active effort to have human rights respected and promoted world-wide. We are thus concerned that there are still some countries where these fundamental human rights are not yet respected.

The wave of democratization in Eastern Europe has swelled to a major current of democratization world-wide and has sparked global reforms. This April the Government of Japan stated that its official development assistance will be extended with special attention to the following considerations: the trends in military expenditures by the recipient country, its efforts to promote democratization and to introduce a market-oriented economy, and the situation with regard to securing basic human rights and freedoms. In line with this approach, Japan intends through its aid to support and contribute to efforts for democratization and economic reforms world-wide.

The tragedy of an increasing number of refugees and displaced persons generated by regional problems and armed conflicts in many parts of the world is a direct affront to the concept of respect for humanity. It is imperative that the entire world join together in extending relief to these unfortunate people, said to number some 17 million, and Japan intends to continue its vigorous assistance through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner

(Mr. Nakayama, Japan)

for Refugees and other international bodies. In this regard, Japan feels it would be appropriate for a working group, to be organized with the participation of international organizations and other interested parties, to study the possibility of a system to forecast new flows of refugees and to issue early warnings.

There is an urgent need to strengthen the abilty of the United Nations to provide relief assistance in the event of major emergencies. Measures must be taken to strengthen the coordination and cooperation structures among the humanitarian relief agencies under the Secretary-General and also to ensure that the relief activities of these agencies have maximum effect. Believing that it would be useful for all countries and United Nations agencies to form a stand-by network for the provision of whatever personnel and relief goods they can offer, Japan intends to take an active part in such an international endeavour.

It is hoped that the United Nations will play a central role in international cooperation for the creation of a new world order. Never before in the nearly half a century the United Nations has been in existence has support for it been so widespread and expectations so high. This is perhaps the first time ever that conditions have been so favourable for achieving the high ideals envisioned by the Organization's founders.

We are at a historic watershed, and whether the United Nations will be able to achieve the great things that people everywhere expect of it and to create a better world for the twenty-first century depends upon what uses we make of it and how well we as Member States support and defend it. Indeed, the United Nations is what its Member States make it.

(Mr. Nakayama, Japan)

At present I would be hard pressed to say that the United Nations is capable of fully and effectively meeting our expectations. We need to create a strong and efficient United Nations able to respond fully to the needs of this new era. It is imperative that all States that value the United Nations work together and with the Secretary-General in strengthening the functions of the Organization. Japan, for its part, will be unstinting in its cooperation. I should like, in this connection, to remind Member States once again that the "former enemies" clauses in the United Nations Charter are utterly inappropriate historic relics which should be promptly deleted.

This session of the General Assembly is a historic one that will consider the new world that is emerging in the wake of the cold war and the Gulf war and the great reforms in the Soviet Union. Recognizing that it has a historic mission to do everything it can for the world order consistent with its position as a nation of peace, Japan is determined to make the maximum effort for the realization of a peaceful, prosperous and humane world for all.

We need to give further impetus to efforts of this kind in order to achieve tangible progress. Let us join together to ensure that this forty-sixth session will prove to be truly significant by providing that impetus.

ADDRESS BY DATO' SERI MR. MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD, PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of Malaysia.

Dato' Seri Mr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia, was escorted to the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT: I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato' Seri Mr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. MAHATHIR (Malaysia): Allow me at the outset to extend my congratulations to Mr. Shihabi upon his election as President of the United Nations General Assembly at its forty-sixth session. It gives me great pleasure as a close friend of Saudi Arabia to see the world community honour his country through his election to that high office. With his wisdom, experience and skill, I am confident that he will discharge his responsibilities successfully, guiding this Assembly session to a fruitful conclusion.

I should also like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to his predecessor, Mr. Guido de Marco, who has carried out his task with dedication and innovative zeal, contributing towards efforts to revitalize and re-examine the functions of the General Assembly.

(Mr. Mahathir, Malaysia)

It is with pleasure that I, on behalf of Malaysia, extend a very warm welcome to His Royal Highness Prince Norodom Sihanouk, President of the Supreme National Council and Head of the Cambodian delegation to the General Assembly. The United Nations, which has long missed the statesmanship and the ebullience of the Prince, will I am sure be happy to welcome the Prince back to the General Assembly. Malaysia is gratified to see at this session of the General Assembly members of the Supreme National Council representing Cambodia offering definite promise of a final solution to the Cambodian issue.

This is also an occasion to join in extending felicitations to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea for their historic decision to become Members of the United Nations as separate States. That decision will serve to defuse some of the tension in North-East Asia and, it is hoped, lead to normalization in their relations. As a friend of both, Malaysia welcomes such developments. May I also welcome as Members of the United Nations the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia and the Republic of Lithuania, which have deservedly regained their sovereignty. I would also like to offer my felicitations to the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Malaysia's Pacific neighbours, who have become Members of the United Nations. Malaysia extends a hand of friendship and stands ready to cooperate with them.

The world has witnessed in the last two years more revolutionary changes than in the preceding 100 years. Without doubt these changes have opened new and historic opportunities to build a better world, anchored firmly in the rule of law, the sovereignty of nations and a collective commitment to social and economic justice for all. The world is ripe for a new world order but it is hoped that this new world order will not be one that is imposed upon the

(Mr. Mahathir, Malaysia)

world by any particular beneficiary of the current revolution. All Members of this august body called the United Nations should participate in shaping the new world order if we are to avoid the return of a new colonial era.

When the United Nations was formed after the Second World War, the allied victors assumed the right to create a world order in which each of the five major Powers could veto anything that did not serve them. But then the five fell out and the East-West conflict divided the world into two antagonistic camps. The cold war that followed not only retarded modern civilization but converted poor countries into pawns and proxies, devastating their territories and economies with confrontations and wars. That they were not fighting their own battles is clear from the outbreak of peace in every continent as soon as the East-West confrontation ended.

With these experiences still fresh in our minds how can we be assured that a new world order formulated by any one country or group of countries will be good for everyone? We are already feeling heavy hands forcing us to do this and not to do that. In East Asia we are told that we may not call ourselves East Asians as Europeans call themselves Europeans and Americans call themselves Americans. We are told that we must call ourselves Pacific people and align ourselves with people who are only partly Pacific, but are more American, Atlantic and European. We may not have an identity that is not permitted, nor may we work together on the basis of that identity. Is this a foretaste of the new world order that we must submit to?

Democracy and only democracy is legitimate and permissible now. No one really disputes this. In fact, speaking for Malaysia, we can think of no alternative but democracy in the context of our pluralistic society. We can also affirm that we have no intention of siding with despots or tyrants or

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those who deny their people their right to democratic government. But is there only one form of democracy or only one high priest to interpret it?

We see differences in the practice of democracy even among those who are preaching democracy to us. Can only the preachers have the right to interpret democracy, to practise it as they deem fit, and to force their interpretations on others? Cannot the converts too interpret the details, if not the basics? If democracy means the right to carry guns, to flaunt homosexuality, to disregard the institution of marriage, to disrupt and damage the well-being of the community in the name of individual rights, to destroy a particular faith, to have privileged institutions which are sacrosanct even if they indulge in lies and instigations which undermine society, the economy and international relations, and the right to permit foreigners to break national laws, then if these are the essential details, cannot the new converts opt to reject them? We the converts will accept the basics but what is the meaning of democracy if we have no right of choice at all or if democracy means that our people are consistently subjected to instability and disruption and economic weaknesses which make us subject to manipulation by the powerful democracies of the world? Hegemony by democratic Powers is no less oppressive than hegemony by totalitarian States.

Democracy means majority rule. The minority must have their rights but do these rights include denial of the rights of the majority? Admittedly, the majority may not oppress the minority but if the minority exercise their rights without responsibility, become the agents of foreign democracies and try to weaken their own country so as to make it a client State to certain democratic Powers, must the majority in the name of democracy submit to the minority?

(Mr. Mahathir, Malaysia)

If democracy is to be the only acceptable system of government within States, should there not also be democracy among the States of the world? In the United Nations we are equal, but five are more equal than the rest of the 166. Seven countries on their own lay down the laws which affect adversely the economies of others. A few nations on their own have taken it upon themselves to determine the new world order. Powerful trade blocs demand voluntary restraints and impose laws and rules extraterritorially. Clearly, the States of the world are not equal; not in the United Nations, not anywhere. If democracy is such an equitable concept, why must we accept inequality between nations?

All these point towards unhealthy and undemocratic relations between nations. Yet equality and freedom are supposed to be the sole guiding principles of this modern civilization.

(Mr. Mahathir, Malaysia)

When the United Nations was formed, in 1945, the victors of the Second World War arrogated to themselves the right to dictate the roles of and the distribution of power between, nations. Many things have happened since then. The victors of 1945 are no longer the dominant players in world affairs. New powerful nations have emerged, while some major Powers have changed structurally; new ideas about rights and wrongs and democracy have crystallized. Are we going to be shackled forever to the results of the Second World War?

If international democracy as represented by the United Nations is to be meaningful and effective, there must be an infusion of some of the current ideas and realities. The world needs policing, as the Gulf War demonstrated. But are we to have self-appointed policemen, or are we to have a police force that is beholden to this body, the United Nations?

Police action by the United Nations needs to be governed by principles and rules. Laying seige to a castle or a city until the people had to eat rats or starve may have seemed appropriate and acceptable in the olden days. But can our conscience remain clear if a whole nation is starved into submission? Can our conscience be clear if the principal victims are the old and the infirm, pregnant women and newborn children, the young and the innocent?

With the advent of modern weapons, should wars be fought or police actio taken by destroying the recalcitrant nation totally in order to avoid casualties among our police force, and above all to avoid the demoralizing effect of coffins being brought home? Is it truly possible that everything that is hit by massive bombs and rockets is military in nature?

(Mr. Mahathir, Malaysia)

Is the Geneva Convention still relevant in the conduct of war? We condemn chemical warfare, but must we still have nuclear weapons around? Are the people who possess them concerned about the horrendous effects of these weapons and are they responsible enough not to use them other than as a deterrent? Who determines when a deterrent is needed?

The leaders of nuclear nations, the people who will push the nuclear buttons, are not safe, as events in the Soviet Union have amply demonstrated. We cannot even be sure that someone who is irrational might not become a leader and gain access to the button. Accordingly, the existence of any nuclear weapons cannot be justified in the present world.

The United Nations, which is playing the role of inspector in Iraq, should extend that role to supervize the destruction of all nuclear weapons everywhere. What is more, it should control the invention and production of other diabolical weapons. Weapons for defence should be solely for defence and their capabilities must be such as to prevent them from being used as weapons of aggression except in a limited way. Research into new weapons by all nations should be reduced and no weapon should be sold by anyone without permits issued by the United Nations. Malaysia has joined efforts with other delegations at this session of the General Assembly to work towards a United Nations arms register that will provide transparency and confidence as a first step towards giving the United Nations comprehensive authority over disarmament.

We need weapons only for fighting criminals. If a nation is subjected to an armed uprising, then the United Nations should take part in putting it down. Democratic governments should be brought down only by democratic processes. Anything that goes beyond democratic processes should merit United

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Nations intervention if it is requested. We cannot preside over the disintegration of nations into ethnic communities, particularly if military action had no role in the initial consolidation of a nation.

Perhaps it may be asked why a tiny developing nation like Malaysia should be giving advice on how the world should be managed. We should not, except that what the world does, and what some nations or even individuals do, can affect us - and affect us adversely.

Today individuals in some developed countries consider it their right to tell us how to rule our country. If we do not heed them, then they consider it their right to destroy our economy, impoverish our people and even overthrow our governments. These people latch on to various causes, such as human rights and the environment, in order to reimpose colonial rule on us. They are helped by the Western media, which also consider it their duty to tell us how to run our country. All these combine to make independence almost meaningless. Our only hope lies in the democratization of the United Nations, especially as the option to defect to the other side is no longer available to us. We want to remain independent but we also want to conform to international norms as determined not by some non-governmental organizations or the so-called advanced democracies, but by all the nations of the world. If we default, then it is the United Nations and not some Robin Hoods that should chastise us.

We are glad that the winds of change have brought about significant developments in South Africa, which we hope will bring about the dismantling of apartheid and the start of negotiations towards a new, democratic and non-racial South Africa. All this would not have been possible without international solidarity, without the United Nations system playing a

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key role in putting the necessary pressure on Pretoria. Despite these important developments, international solidarity, as manifested in the 1989 United Nations consensus Declaration, must be maintained to meet the still-difficult challenges ahead and ensure a successful conclusion to the process of change in South Africa. Right now priority must be given to putting an end to violence in black townships, reviving the preparatory process for constitutional negotiations involving the Pretoria regime, the African National Congress, Inkatha and others, as well as addressing the problems of social and economic inequities brought about by decades of apartheid.

While the climate of peace and dialogue has benefited many parts of the world, the Middle East remains the most volatile region and the Palestinian people continue to suffer under the cruel and illegal Israeli occupation. The current United States peace initiative has raised the hopes of many nations, including Malaysia, for an active peace process that would lead to a comprehensive solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the establishment of an independent State for the Palestinians. We welcome the initiative and commitment of President Bush and Secretary Baker in undertaking this difficult task and we wish them well.

The plight of the Palestinian people touches the heart of every Malaysian. We would like the Palestinian people to be treated fairly and justly. If what they do to protect themselves is considered criminal, then the same deeds committed by the Israelis should be considered equally criminal. Governments which kidnap and kill people should be condemned even more than desperate freedom fighters who are forced to use violence because they can seek justice in no other way. The accelerated build-up of illegal

(Mr. Mahathir, Malaysia)

Jewish settlements in the occupied territories is an act of unwarranted provocation by the Israeli authorities and constitutes a very serious and unacceptable obstacle to the current peace efforts. In our view, Jews in the Soviet Union are better off there, where their entrepreneurial skills could be put to good use to rebuild the economy of that country.

(Mr. Mahathir, Malaysia)

Next year the nations of the world are expected to meet in Rio de Janeiro to discuss the environment. If we are to meet there, we need to know whether it is going to be a constructive meeting or a finger-pointing, third-world-bashing session. If that conference is to be productive, we shall have to face the facts and deal with them. Unless we accept the truth regarding the sources and the causes of environmental pollution, rising temperatures and ozone depletion we are not going to get anywhere in our efforts to reverse the process. If we go to Rio, let us go there to discuss and agree on a common course of action on the environment and development.

The idea that the tropical forests can be saved only by boycotting tropical timber smacks more of economic arm-twisting than of a real desire to save the forests. If selective logging and sustainable management are prevented, and consequently the forests become no longer a source of wealth, the worthless forests may be cleared in order to produce food crops or to provide firewood in poor developing nations.

On the other hand, the vast potential for reafforestation has hardly been touched. The deserts of California could be converted into a tropical forest, complete with rain-forest flora and fauna, simply by pumping the ground water and planting trees. Instead, the underground water is being used for golf courses and artificial lakes to surround luxury hotels. If we can build sophisticated warplanes at $1 billion apiece, surely we should have the ingenuity and the money to create tropical forests out of deserts. Libya should be congratulated on tapping underground water to irrigate its desert. It is shameful that nations richer and more advanced than Libya have done nothing significant to green the world.

(Mr. Mahathir, Malaysia)

The use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and fossil fuels is greatest in the richest countries. Is there really a need for CFCs for spraying when a simple rubber bulb can do the same job? Do the countries with huge populations of monster automobiles really need to use them when small cars or efficient public transport systems could use electricity generated by hydro-power plants?

We in the poor countries should like to have some cheap hydro-electric power. True, we should have to sacrifice a few thousand acres of our forests. But we can spare these, for we have millions of acres more. But all manner of campaigns are mounted against our proposals for hydro-electric projects. Now, of course, the World Bank will be used to deprive poor countries of cheap hydro-electric power - and all this after the rich have developed most of their hydro-electric potential. Can we be blamed if we think this is a ploy to keep us poor?

If the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development is to be meaningful, let us hear now of the plans of the rich to reduce their own contribution to environmental degradation. If the sole approach is to link aid to poor countries with what they must do environmentally for the well-being of the rich, then the Conference will be a lost opportunity.

Economic growth in a poor country cannot depend on the domestic market. To grow, poor countries must have either aid or free access to foreign markets. It would be near-suicidal for poor countries to keep their market for themselves. On the other hand, there is every reason for the rich to keep their markets for themselves.

(Mr. Mahathir, Malaysia)

The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was conceived to promote free and equitable world trade. But how can poor individual countries argue their cases in the GATT Rounds when the huge trade blocs monopolize the meetings? Who would listen to the plaintive arguments of a tiny, insignificant third-world country?

To be heard, the poor must band together - not to form impoverished trade blocs, but to lend weight to their arguments. And so the East Asia Economic Group was proposed - not as a trade bloc, but as a forum for the nations of East Asia to confer with each other with a view to reaching agreement on a common stand to deal with a common problem caused by the restrictive trade practices of the rich.

We are perplexed to find that this objective merely to have a voice in international affairs is being opposed, openly and covertly, by the very country that preaches free trade. It is even more surprising that there should be such opposition when the North American Free Trade Association itself is being formed on the basis of the principle of the right of free association of independent countries. Can it be that what is right and proper for the rich and the powerful is not right and proper for the poor? One is tempted to suspect racist bias behind this stand.

Malaysia has supported the United Nations at every turn. We believe that the United Nations is the only legitimate instrument for the creation of an equitable world, for protection of the weak and the poor from the pressures of the strong. We welcome the end of the cold war, but we must admit to feeling more naked and vulnerable than ever. There is nowhere to look to except the United Nations. More than ever before, we need a greater role for the United Nations in the affairs of the world.

(Mr. Mahathir, Malaysia)

While we believe that a restructured Security Council has a vital role to play, we should like to see a balanced constitutional relationship, including accountability between the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretariat in order that the United Nations may truly be made the guardian of peace, as suggested in the Secretary-General's report of 6 September 1991. Related to this, the Malaysian delegation has joined others in efforts to deliberate on ways and means of revitalizing the organs of the United Nations, including the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

The experience of the Gulf conflict also makes it imperative that the United Nations explore and put into effect all the potential for preventive diplomacy, including a more proactive role on the part of the Secretary-General and expanded peace-keeping operations. Malaysia believes that the time has come for the international community to explore also the potential of the International Court of Justice - the judicial organ of the United Nations - as a means of fostering the resolution of conflict by peaceful means and in accordance with the rule of law.

The international community is now at the proverbial crossroads. We truly have a chance to build a better world through consensus and to use the United Nations as the principal forum and vehicle for the achievement of our objectives. We cannot afford to miss this historic opportunity to benefit from the peace dividend resulting from the cessation of the cold war. It must, however, be underlined that a global consensus approach requires tolerance of different ideas and practices inherent in our complex and pluralistic world. There is simply no place for an international order based on hegemony and domination. Let us, then, work together as partners in our common endeavour to build a better world.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of Malaysia for the statement he has just made.

Dato' Seri Mr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia, was escorted from the rostrum.

Mr. KA (Senegal) (interpretation from French): By electing Ambassador Shihabi of Saudi Arabia to the presidency of its forty-sixth session, the General Assembly paid a tribute to his eminent professional and personal qualities as well as do honour to his country, whose commitment to international peace and security is well known to all. In extending sincerest congratulations to him we should also like to assure him that we are entirely at his disposal as he carries out his mission.

To his predecessor, Ambassador Guido de Marco, we wish to express our feelings of deep gratitude for the competent and committed manner in which he discharged his mandate in the course of a particularly busy year.

To our Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, we renew our deep gratitude for his tireless efforts in the service of the noble ideals of our Organization.

It is fortunate that our Organization each day becomes more universal. Last year Namibia and Liechtenstein were admitted to the Organization. This year the Republic of Korea, the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have been admitted to membership in the great family of the United Nations. We welcome them to our midst with the conviction that they will help to consolidate the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

This year's session of the General Assembly is taking place in the midst of the upheavals which have been taking place since 1989, as a result of which a new political map of the world is being drawn before our very eyes. These upheavals, which have brought about a radical departure from the antagonisms of the cold-war era, have produced till now positive effects inspiring much hope.

(Mr. Ka, Senegal)

Many peoples, which yesterday were subject to the oppressive yoke of the systems and structures that ran counter to their aspirations, are today slaking their thirst for freedom and attaining their desire for emancipation. On all the continents a new wind of freedom and democracy is blowing.

At the same time, the process of disarmament is being consolidated and the way is now open for the settlement of conflicts which have thus far eluded all attempts at solution.

In Angola, the civil war is coming to an end and national reconciliation, which has been so earnestly desired, is now on the agenda.

In Liberia, the process of peace initiated by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is proceeding apace and we hope that eventually it will make it possible for the Liberian people to achieve national reconciliation through free and democratic elections. Senegal, which has the honour of presiding over ECOWAS, wishes to take this opportunity to appeal for the international community's support for this regional effort to help Liberia out of a crisis which has lasted far too long.

In Mozambique, a process of negotiations has begun. However, we regret that this process has stalled, and we should like to encourage the parties to the conflict, and all men of good will who earnestly hope to help this country regain peace in national concord, to pursue efforts with a view to the final settlement of a conflict which has already cost this friendly country so much.

In South Africa, encouraging measures have been taken to bring about the eradication of a system that the entire world has condemned. Senegal supports the continuation of efforts that have already been made in that country, convinced as we are that men of the calibre of Nelson Mandela and of Frederick de Klerk will successfully conclude their just struggle for democracy and national reconciliation.

(Mr. Ka, Senegal)

In Cambodia, significant progress has been made in the process of implementation of the settlement plan aimed at bringing about an overall solution in harmony and peace.

The new climate in international relations has made it possible for us to overcome a crisis which, by its very nature and because of its consequences, was a major challenge to the credibility of our Organization.

Ever since the beginning of the conflict in the Gulf, my country has upheld the side of law in condemning the inadmissible aggression to which Kuwait had fallen victim, and once again commends the determination with which the international community was able to ensure respect for right and legality.

The unity and steadfastness of purpose with which the United Nations restored the inalienable rights of Kuwait are cause for much hope - hope that henceforth it will be possible for our Organization to achieve its primary purpose, which is:

"To be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends."

This is related to the noble task which the international community has the overriding duty to carry out today: and that is to make sure, unequivocally, that these hopes are not dashed.

It does not detract from the positive aspects of the changes which are under way to emphasize that we still have a long way to go before achieving a world of peace, justice and progress.

Along with the prospects for security, freedom and progress, chronic ills, such as underdevelopment and poverty, persist, and at the same time new challenges are emerging which take the form of ethnic or nationality conflicts, the risk of civil war and waves of xenophobia, as a result of

(Mr. Ka, Senegal)

emigration which is today the topic of discussion in many wealthy countries and a matter of daily concern in developing countries.

That is to say that we find ourselves at a crossroads, at a crucial time, when we must build a new order on the ruins of the old which is crumbling before our very eyes. Thus, we are faced with all the problems of building something new on what is old. This is a challenge that all nations must meet together.*

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* Mr. Rogers (Belize), Vice President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Ka, Senegal)

If, heretofore, the stand-off between the military blocs and the power rivalries between them have ensured peace in one part of the world and have even shifted conflicts to other geographical areas, it is now no longer possible to make this confrontation an excuse for perpetuating intolerable situations.

As a free and democratic country, as a country that is devoted to peace through law, fully committed to the strengthening of peace and security and to the enhancement of international solidarity and cooperation, Senegal wishes to make its contribution to this consideration of this new international order which the whole world so ardently desires.

The first consideration must be to ensure respect for law in international relations. In our view, that is an indispensable condition for a new order with which all countries, all peoples and all nations of the world will identify because the new order will express their legitimate aspirations for freedom, peace and social progress.

My country has always insisted that there can be no lasting peace, no security and no justice unless all nations comply with the rules of law which it is the responsibility of the United Nations to lay down.

And here we see the full meaning of the hopes that have been placed in the resolution of the crisis in the Gulf to which I have just referred. The unprecedented mobilization of efforts in support of international law during this crisis should inspire future efforts in every situation where law is in jeopardy. If justice is to prevail the law must be the same for everyone.

Is is not one of the fundamental purposes of this Organization to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and the self-determination of peoples?

(Mr. Ka, Senegal)

In saying that, I cannot but think of the tragedy of the Palestinian people, who are still waiting for the international community to restore their inalienable rights to their homeland and to a land where they can establish the political and social system of their choice.

Today, as laudable efforts are being made to organize a peace conference on the Middle East, we cherish the hope that this conference will be able to provide a framework for negotiations which, on the basis of the relevant decisions of the United Nations, may finally initiate a process leading towards peace, security and good neighbourliness with respect for the fundamental rights of the peoples and States of the entire region.

But in our opinion, the establishment of an order of peace and security requires more than the implementation of real preventive diplomacy to manage situations where there is a threat to peace.

The Security Council, which is entrusted with the task of maintaining international peace and security, would appear to be the ideal body for carrying out this mission. The new atmosphere which has prevailed in the Security Council should now enable it fully to discharge the authority which has been vested in it by the Charter of the United Nations. Would it not then be desirable to go a step farther and anticipate and prevent these conflicts?

If the Council were to hold periodic meetings at which it would review the international situation it might be able to identify potential areas of conflict, and then seek to contain the crises before they explode. In this connection, thought should be given to strengthening the role of the Secretary-General and his authority to send observer missions or missions of inquiry to inform the Council about the situation.

(Mr. Ka, Senegal)

The United Nations has already scored striking success in its peace-keeping operations and deserves our congratulations. We reaffirm our willingness to continue to support those operations, which play such a useful part in maintaining international peace. We believe that high priority should be given to strengthening and expanding such endeavours wherever there may be a risk of conflict.

Establishing and consolidating peace and security throughout the world also means encouraging the emergence of regimes of freedom and democracy. Freedom is a powerful influence for peace.

Is it not significant, as we look at the history of international relations of our day, we see that out of the approximately 150 conflicts which have caused bloodshed throughout the world since the Second World War, none has pitted countries with a democratic system against each other?

Is it not significant that freedom has been the true catalyst in the present relaxation of the tension between the two blocs which were antagonists before?

As the Constitution of UNESCO proclaims: "Wars begin in the minds of men and it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed."

Constructing these defences of peace implies enhancing the values of freedom, tolerance and respect for human rights.

And it is because, today, there is a consensus concerning respect for these values that we are experiencing a new era in international relations.

These dynamic forces working for freedom must be encouraged for, as the South Commission so rightly points out:

(Mr. Ka, Senegal)

"In the final analysis, the South's plea for justice, equity, and democracy in the global society cannot be dissociated from its pursuit of these goals within its own societies ... all these cannot but ... increase the South's chances of securing a new world order" (The Challenge to the South: The Report of the South Commission, p. 287).

Senegal and all 16 members of the Economic Community of West Africa understood this. At their last meeting in Abuja, Nigeria, on 6 July 1991, they adopted a "Declaration of Political Principles", which was aimed precisely at giving them a firm foundation along democratic lines.

In that Declaration, the member countries committed themselves to:

"... promote and encourage the full enjoyment by all our peoples of their fundamental human rights, especially their political, economic, social, cultural, and other rights inherent in the dignity of the human person and essential to his free and progressing development".

By expressing in this way their profound attachment to the freedom of the individual and the inalienable right of the individual to participate in the building of the society in which they live, the countries of the Community have committed themselves to making a positive contribution to a more just and peaceful new world.

The primacy of international law, the prevention of conflicts and the promotion of freedom are the elements which will enable us to build a new international order capable of meeting continuing challenges.

To build a future that is different from the past means also and especially that we have to meet the chronic challenge of underdevelopment. It has been stated that development is another name for peace. Eleven years ago

(Mr. Ka, Senegal)

the North-South Commission on the problems of international development, presided over by the former German Chancellor Willy Brandt, strongly stressed in its report entitled North-South - a Programme for Survival:

"Where hunger reigns peace cannot prevail. If we want to banish war we must also banish poverty."

(Mr. Ka, Senegal)

Yet today, despite this warning, poverty persists and is spreading. Constantly worsened by the continuous decrease of raw materials prices, foreign debt and the demands of structural adjustment programmes, this state of affairs shows that international cooperation for development is still not part of the renewal characterizing recent international relations. It is an overwhelming fact: crushed under the weight of indebtedness and the worsening of the terms of trade, the countries of the South work and produce more in return for less in order to pay interest that is itself subject to foreign currency fluctuations. The South continues thus to finance the North at the rate of tens of billions of dollars yearly. Hence, the gap between the rich and the poor is growing.

Admittedly, there is an increasing awareness of this unbearable state of affairs and of the interdependence of the economies of the North and the South. It is now recognized that without solving the problems of development, no solution will be found to global environment problems or to those of immigration and drug trafficking, to name but a few.

Indeed, constructive initiatives have been taken to help redress the endemic imbalance between the North and the South. I am thinking, in particular, of the Paris Conference of September 1990 devoted to the problems of the least developed countries, during which a Programme of Action for those countries was adopted. I am also thinking of numerous individual initiatives taken by some countries of the North to ease the burden of some countries of the South. Right here in New York, the eighteenth special session of the General Assembly in April 1990 identified the recovery of growth in the developing countries as the most serious challenge of the 1990s, while endeavouring to raise international cooperation to the level of that challenge.

(Mr. Ka, Senegal)

However, we must, of course, go further. In the General Assembly last year President François Mitterrand introduced the idea of an international plan of assistance to the developing world, financed by new resources, a plan designed to bring together for a substantive debate the actors in the "tragedy of modern times", that of underdevelopment. These resources could be made available, because with the coming cessation of the arms race, considerable means will be released as part of what is called "the peace dividend". The long-expressed call for disarmament in favour of development thus becomes even more urgent today. In this regard, it should be noted that the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, held in New York in September 1987, recognized the moral and political link between disarmament and development and the fact that that link should be given practical effect through specific measures taken regionally and internationally.

Therefore, we believe that the time has come to resume consideration of this question and to ensure that at least part of the huge resources heretofore devoted to the arms race is transferred to development tasks. However, the idea of an international plan of assistance to the developing world calls for establishing a North-South dialogue, which is indispensable for the renewing of international economic relations. Deeply aware of this need, Senegal, together with India, Venezuela and Egypt, took the initiative on the occasion of the bicentennial of the French Revolution in Paris in July 1989 of launching informal discussions on this topic with some countries of the North. This effort is continuing, and we hope that in the end the resumption of this dialogue will be fruitful.

This dialogue in favour of cooperation is more desirable than ever to

(Mr. Ka, Senegal)

establish mechanisms of cooperation for solidarity and peace between the two poles of the world. Just as indispensable as North-South dialogue is the promotion of South-South cooperation, which is an important element of international economic relations. My country, which has made South-South cooperation an essential element of its foreign policy, has also been one of the initiators of the summit group on South-South consultation and cooperation, the Group of 15, which held its first summit meeting in Kuala Lumpur in June 1990. This would be the kind of forum that would give specific content and political drive to South-South cooperation.

It is in the same spirit that Senegal has worked, with faith and determination, to promote African economic integration, which has currently entered a new stage with the adoption, during the last summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity, of a Treaty establishing the African Economic Community. The future community will develop on the basis of regional groups, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), within whose framework the 16 States of West Africa will endeavour to organize genuine integration in the economic, social and cultural and even political fields.

We intend to continue these efforts and to intensify them, because we are aware, as President Abdou Diouf has stated, that

> "the solution to our problems will be found first of all in the organization of the economic solidarity of our States through the establishment of a truly integrated community".

This statement of the Head of State of Senegal, the President of ECOWAS, reflects as eloquently as can be our resolute commitment to achieve African integration, which we consider to be a major step in our permanent quest for increased well-being and progress.

(Mr. Ka, Senegal)

This leads me to speak of the specific case of Africa, which the General Assembly considered once again a few days ago during a review meeting of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990. May I remind members that President Abdou Diouf, the then President of OAU, was one of those responsible for the special session of the General Assembly devoted to the critical economic situation in Africa in May 1986, which led to the drafting of this Programme of Action.

It is well known today that Africa has met the commitments it undertook within the framework of this Programme, by implementing the desired reforms in conjunction with international agencies. We must stress that the other partners have not done so. Thus, five years after the adoption of the Programme, it is evident that there has been a net deterioration in economic and social conditions in Africa, which was clearly noted by the Secretary-General in his report to the review meeting a few days ago.

(Mr. Ka, Senegal)

But, despite the laudable efforts of the African Group, to our great regret that meeting was unable to achieve consensus enabling it to adopt the draft of the new programme for the development of Africa in the 1990s that had been submitted to it. Hence we take this opportunity to appeal to the international community to take at our present session, which will once more take up this draft programme, the courageous measures needed owing to the unprecedented crisis buffeting our continent.

For our part, we shall spare no effort to bring this about.

For a country of the Sahel, like Senegal, which for years has been confronted with problems of drought and desertification, environment problems take on a special importance.

Aware of the fact that the struggle to halt the degradation of the environment must first be waged at the national level, in its development policy my country has given priority to the campaign against drought and desertification and for the preservation of natural resources.

The importance and scope of the problems linked to the preservation of the environment are such that it is possible to solve them only a a global, planetary scale. International solidarity in this area is thus particularly significant - all the more so given that interests here are so clearly interdependent.

Indeed, the ecological health of our planet is today seriously affected. The causes are well known: on the one hand, the enormous waste of resources in the consumer societies of the North and, on the other, the desperate struggle for survival in the poor countries of the South. Hence the problem can be solved only through an approach that takes into account the close relationship between environment and development.

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Fortunately, the international community has swiftly realized the scope of the problem and its inherent dangerous on world-wide consequences.

The entry into force in 1989 of the Montreal Protocol on the Ozone, the adoption in Basle, also in 1989, the Convention on Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes, the London Conference on Climate, held last year, the United Nations study on the rhythm, nature and impact of climatic changes - soon to be published - all constitute positive initiatives following upon this awareness.

But these initiatives will have to be strengthened and broadened. That is why we place great hope on the Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in 1992 in Brazil. It should give us an opportunity to study in depth problems linked to climatic changes, to establish principles that should guide our collective attitude towards environment and development problems and, above all, to work out a strategy for action likely not only to halt the degradation of the environment but especially to reverse it.

The economic crisis in our countries has led to social distortions affecting in particular the weakest or poorest segments of our populations: women, children and legions of jobless who are deprived of everything, even of a future. Problems such as the advancement of women, the survival and protection of children and illicit drug trafficking should receive our full attention.

In this connection, my country reaffirms its unshakeable determination to continue supporting the implementation of the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and the World Plan of Action, adopted here in September last year by Heads of State or Government, on the occasion of the first World Summit for Children.

(Mr. Ka, Senegal)

It is also an opportunity for us to appeal to the international community, within the framework of the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse (1991-2000), to strive to implement measures advocated by the Global Programme of Action adopted at the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly, devoted to Drugs.

I should like once more to insist on the fact that juvenile delinquency, illicit drug trafficking, illegal immigration and so many other negative social phenomena remain linked to the state of underdevelopment endemic to the poor countries of the South.

The true solution must thus be found in the concerted implementation of balanced development strategies that take due account of the social dimension of economic progress.

Forty-six years ago, as the world emerged from the nightmare of the Second World War, a hope was born and a conviction took concrete form - the hope that men everywhere would henceforth know how to prevent the unleashing of new wars by working together to ensure respect for the right of each individual to freedom, dignity and justice, as well as the right of each nation to independence and sovereignty; the conviction that the intellectual and material resources available to mankind could now be devoted exclusively to the peaceful building of the future, and that they could serve to overcome, everywhere, the scourges of poverty, ignorance, epidemics and natural catastrophes.

For many nations in the world the evolution of the international situation did not bring about the fulfilment of aspirations to justice and peace. The seemingly irreducible antagonism of two super-Powers, each capable

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of destroying the planet many times over, ended up by making of international relations a question of simple arithmetic: the weakest peoples became mere pawns and each gain for one camp was a loss for the other.

Today, as this bipolar order is collapsing, we have an historic opportunity to build a new world based on peace, justice and progress. We can achieve it if we strive sufficiently, for we have the resources and the ability. Mankind has already overcome too many challenges in the course of its turbulent history for there to be any doubt that it can meet this challenge of the third millennium. That is our fondest hope, and it is in our common interest.

In welcoming this era of hope and freedom, my country fervently wishes that the emerging new world order will be the collective work of all nations of the world so that never again will any country, any nation, forget that the rule of law is a necessity for all States of the international community and that this rule applies equally to all.

ADDRESS BY MR. FAZL-UL-HAQ KHALIQYAR, PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Afghanistan.

Mr. Fazl-Ul-Haq Khaliqyar, Prime Minister of the Republic of Afghanistan, was escorted to the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT: I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister of the Republic of Afghanistan, His Excellency Mr. Fazl-Ul-Haq Khaliqyar. I invite him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. KHALIQYAR (Afghanistan) (spoke in Dari; English text furnished by the delegation): At the outset I wish to convey to Ambassador Shihabi my warmest congratulations on his election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session, and to wish him every success in carrying out his high and responsible duties. It is a source of satisfaction that an experienced diplomat of such high calibre and distinguished qualities has been elected to this prestigious post. The fact that the President comes from Saudi Arabia, a country so close to the hearts of all Muslims, has a special significance for us.

I should like also to express our appreciation for the valuable services of his predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Guido de Marco of Malta, in succesfully guiding the affairs of the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

The Republic of Afghanistan sincerely congratulates the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia on joining the community of nations. It should be pointed out that our country was among the first officially to recognize the independence of the Republics of Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia.

My visit to New York and my presence in this Hall are not in pursuance of the established tradition of utilizing this world rostrum to promote and publicize Government and State policies. I appear here in the name not only of a Government but also of a nation, a nation which for 13 years has been

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burning in the flames of war. That war has posed a grave danger to the spiritual and physical existence of our nation.

During those fateful 13 years my country, Afghanistan, has been dragged into the abyss of a conflict so wild and merciless that it has sent one tenth of its valorous and patriotic people to annihilation and another one third into a miserable life of exile. This conflict has plundered Afghanistan's cultural values and heritage and wasted its material wealth to the value of the labour and money invested over the past 50 years in social and economic development. Above all, the fabric of our society and our national unity, the products of thousands of years of coexistence between inseparable elements of our people and of their common struggle to safeguard the independent national identity of the Afghans, have been subjected to a dangerous game.

Why has a nation that lived by the toil of its hands and the sweat of its brow - a nation that bowed to none but its Creator and harboured animosity towards none - suffered such a terrible destiny? Who is responsible for all the sufferings of the Afghan people? What are the reasons behind all those miseries? We must accept that responses to these questions vary. Some consider that awful poverty, the socio-economic policies of previous Governments and Afghanistan's unbalanced reliance on one of the world's blocs are the main factors. Others blame the sensitive strategic and geopolitical location of Afghanistan and the cut-throat competition of the cold-war Powers and their regional allies for the expansion of their spheres of influence. The degree to which these and other factors influenced the situation may vary. But what is certain is that the fingers of accusation and blame point in more than one direction.

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The main question now is this: Is it now the time for us to bring each of the relevant factors before the tribunal of history and to sit in judgement, measuring and apportioning the extent of their respective roles and responsibilities? Alas, not yet.

How can one deny that the bulk of the documents and evidence related to external and internal developments concerning Afghanistan since April 1978 are still being kept confidential? How can one claim that the Afghans and the world public have full knowledge of all the facts as they were, not as they were portrayed? Are we in a position impartially and fairly to evaluate and analyse the events and their implications or to judge whether the continuation of the present situation makes it inevitable that new factors will emerge to protract the bloodshed?

I sincerely believe that under the present circumstances no one can say the final word on the actual reasons for and causes of the bloody adventure in our country, and that no one has the moral right to delay an early end to the crisis on that pretext.

Considering the interests of the Afghans and the dominant world trends, narrow-minded and revanchist notions and attitudes must be set aside. Instead, we must find a solution that will promote the salvation and the good of the Afghans and further the interests of regional and world peace and stability. There can be no doubt that this must be a peaceful political solution in conformity with humanism and the ethics of civilized man, with Afghan traditions and with Islamic teachings and tenets. The use of force and the settlement of problems through war have become rejected and abhorrent. Notwithstanding the pain and wounds of the afflicted body and soul of the

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patient people of Afghanistan, there is no reason to doubt the futility of attempts to gain military superiority.

Furthermore, some of the important reasons for the emergence and aggravation of the Afghan problem either have ceased to exist or have been downgraded. The principles and foundations of cold-war-era international relations have been drastically altered, and the bloodstained arenas of East-West rivalry have become more and more limited. Two years have now passed since Soviet troops left our country: there have been considerable transformations in Afghanistan's State policies, functions and legal, political and economic structures. Similarly, there have been palpable changes in the composition of the parties to the conflict and in the policies of their allies. Afghans - each of whom has lost at least one dear one - have grown fed up with the destructive and fratricidal war. Nor is the world prepared any longer to provide money and weapons for Afghans to kill Afghans. Those changes, which result from the new way of thinking at the world level and from the policy of national reconciliation within our country, have provided conditions conducive to ending our people's pain and hardship.

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My Government assumed the heavy responsibility of administration and received the vote of confidence of the Parliament at one of the most sensitive and critical junctures of our country's history. However, I have not hidden the fact that the main mission of my Government, as a government of national accord, is to help facilitate the task of transition towards the establishment of an elected new government in conformity with the aspirations of the vast majority of the Afghan people. Therefore, it is not accidental that two thirds of the present cabinet members are influential, non-partisan personalities and experienced technocrats trained in the West.

I must state clearly that in the present conditions of our country only an insane person can cultivate the feelings of ambition and lust for power. But what has compelled me and my colleagues to shoulder the heavy and exhausting burden of government is our recognition of the awesome responsibility which lies before us and all other patriotic Afghans for the destiny of our downtrodden people.

We know that in the present circumstances no government has the right to claim that it enjoys the support of all Afghans. But this fact can in no way deny us the right to serve all segments of our people. We consider this not only as our right but also as our humanitarian obligation and our patriotic and Islamic duty. We have earnestly taken it upon ourselves to serve as an instrument of conciliation and compromise among the Afghan warring factions of the Government. Hence, we have adopted policies which place the supreme national interests of Afghanistan above all partisan, ideological, tribal, linguistic and religious considerations. We believe that peace has become the highest aspiration and the most urgent need of our people. Therefore, we consider it our honourable and immediate duty to strive for the fulfilment of

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that aspiration. But we can accomplish this mission successfully only if there is a real will and determination to bring about the cessation of war and the establishment of peace on the part of all effective forces of Afghan society. Such a determination could convincingly be demonstrated only by the practical readiness for the commencement of negotiations among the main parties concerned. In defiance of Afghan and world public opinion, unfortunately, some circles still harbour unrealistic hopes of achieving military supremacy, hopes which impede the commencement of intra-Afghan dialogue that could serve as a key for solving other problems.

How can one claim to be a proponent of peaceful, political settlement and, at the same time, refrain from holding negotiations with the main parties? Afghans throughout history have preserved the innocent name of Afghans and have lived honourably as a united whole, fraternally and with independence of judgement. Afghans have a common home; in order to salvage it from the scourge of war, they should unite and find a sound formula. If we ignore the Afghans abroad in the peace process, we shall commit a mistake as grave as those who wish to negate the role of Afghans inside the country. The defeat of repeated military efforts is indicative of certain hard and objective realities which should be recognized and properly understood.

There is no doubt that the supreme interests of the nation will provide a solid and firm basis for conciliation and harmony among the conflicting realities. We fully understand that the years of confrontation and the ensuing suffering have created a wide gulf of mistrust and hard feelings among the sides. But the present and future interests of the country and of its people make it absolutely necessary to put aside feelings of vengeance and revenge. To attempt to settle scores and embark on a vendetta would result in

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a vicious circle. Mutual courage, graciousness and forgiveness are required to reduce the deep sorrow of yester-years in anticipation of the happiness and tranquillity of the morrow and to heal the psychological and physical injuries of our devout people with the balm of national accord and unity.

The Government of the Republic of Afghanistan has made serious and sincere efforts to eliminate the reasons and causes of disagreements and to endeavour to bring ever closer the positions of the sides.

The following statement was made in continuation of several proposals offered by Kabul on a political settlement on the seventy-second anniversary of the country's independence:

> "We are in favour of direct, face-to-face and unconditional talks with opponents of the State of the Republic of Afghanistan, because setting prior conditions would result in delaying the talks. The process of negotiations with a number of opposition groups continues at different levels, while other opponents still have reasons which prevent them from holding direct negotiations. We propose that talks between the representatives of the Republic of Afghanistan and the opposition groups take place in the presence of neutral third parties. In other words, the Republic of Afghanistan is prepared to negotiate with the opposition groups through the mediation of the United Nations or of the countries interested in the Afghan problem."

The Afghan president, in reaction to the United States-Soviet joint declaration last week, proposed as a first step the enforcement of a cease-fire throughout Afghanistan and the commencement of talks between the State and the Council of the Internal Mijahideen Commander, leader of the

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parties and groups based in Peshawar and Tehran, the former king and his followers, and Afghan intellectuals living in Europe and America.

Afghanistan is a traditional society. In Afghanistan people hold their aged and elderly in high esteem. In the present conditions when the flames of war are ablaze in the country, our people expect their elders, wherever they may be - among them His Majesty Mohammed Zaher Shah, the former king of our country - to take an active part in extinguishing this fire. We know that all Afghan personalities abroad are also concerned about their country, but as a proverb goes in the Pashtu language, "The ground burns where the fire is set". The country and its people are awaiting them. Silence and indifference in the present situation would be an unforgiveable sin.

From this authoritative world rostrum, I wish to communicate to the Assembly and to the people of the world the silent cry of the millions of tired and war-ridden Afghans whose lives have become a dreadful nightmare. The international community, and in particular the permanent members of the Security Council, should recognize their moral responsibilities in the face of the disaster in Afghanistan by making use of the mechanism provided in the Charter of the United Nations and lay the groundwork for negotiations and a political settlement. Silence and indifference in the face of this tragedy of blood, tears and fire would reflect a lack of conscience and an abandonment of moral responsibility. Such inaction should not continue.

Here I wish to express the appreciation and gratitude of the people and Government of Afghanistan for the serious and untiring efforts of His Excellency Javier Perez de Cuellar, Secretary-General of the United Nations and his personal representative, Mr. Benon Sevan, in helping to achieve a peaceful political settlement of the Afghan problem.

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The Secretary-General's statement, which contained the five main elements of a political settlement of the Afghan problem, represents the international concensus and was supported by the Republic of Arghanistan and all interested countries. These documents guarantee the preservation of national sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence, the right of the Afghan people freely to choose the political and socio-economic system of their country and other values on which all Afghans are in agreement. The Secretary-General's statement takes into account the nature of the Afghan conflict and contains elements of a comprehensive, practicable, just and honourable settlement for all the warring parties. These qualifications make it possible to achieve a national accord around the Secretary-General's statement, an understanding that has emerged among the concerned external parties. One of the salient elements of the statement is that, at the end of the transition period and peace process, the basic needs of our people, namely, security, stability, democracy and development will be ensured.

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I urge this great assembly of nations to utilize its moral authority and prestige to call upon all the Afghan parties and the governments concerned to take steps towards implementing the Secretary-General's statement and to begin negotiations to that end without any further delay. I strongly believe that in the warmth of the national unity of the Afghans and world solidarity, the ice of misunderstanding and hard feeling will break and, by virtue of their traditions of thousands of years, the Afghans will find peaceful ways and means of settling their problems and will embark on rebuilding their ruined country. Our sisters and brothers who are away from their homes and hearths will return to their relatives and friends; all Afghans will join hands and adopt a socio-political order that will regulate their interactions with the government of the State in accordance with their own wishes.

I believe that if we put aside the personal interests of a few in the Afghan plain, and curb the illegitimate influence and hidden intentions of certain circles in some countries, the remaining differences are not so substantial as not to admit of a solution.

The joint declaration of the United States Secretary of State Mr. James Baker and the Soviet Foreign Minister Mr. Boris Pankin at the end of their talks on Afghanistan in Moscow is in fact a gigantic step towards removing one of the barriers in the way to ensuring peace in our country. We strongly hope that this constructive position on the part of the two guarantors of the Geneva accords will receive the practical support and cooperation of other involved countries.

We also hope that the recent visit of the Secretary-General to Teheran and Riyadh and his discussions with the leaders of Iran, Pakistan,

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Saudi Arabia and with the two Mujahideen leaders, namely, Hazrat Saheb Sebghatullah Mujaddidi and Jenab Pir Saheb Sayed Ahmad Gailani may bring an added impetus to the peace efforts and prepare the ground for negotiations on the launching of a transition process. In the course of my visit to the Secretary-General, we discussed all practical and logical options and possibilities towards that end.

Afghans have repeatedly proved that they will not hesitate to sacrifice their personal interests for the sake of the supreme interests of their country; but they will not allow others to take advantage of the present-day problems of the Afghans in order to impose their hidden intentions upon them. Afghans, whether inside or outside their country, are extremely sensitive about their national interests and will not accept any interference in, or infringements upon, their internal affairs.

We hope and expect that the United Nations will take some new initiatives for political settlement and devise, through consultations between Afghans, a mechanism for the transition period that can prevent all and any acts of vengeance and vendetta, in line with the Secretary-General's statement.

We are not speaking here about the so-called rights of minorities. Residents of Afghanistan are Afghans and Muslims. In fact, the question of minorities, as perceived in the political literature of other countries, is irrelevant in the case of Afghanistan; what should lie at the centre of our thoughts and actions is the need to ensure and safeguard the human rights of all citizens of Afghanistan regardless of their previous affiliations and deeds.

The transition mechanism must guarantee this matter in a comprehensive and reliable manner. I urge all peaceloving nations of the world that, while

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continuing their endeavours towards a peaceful end to the Afghan conflict, they should also provide generous assistance to our people with a view to eradicating the sad and grim consequences of the war from the life of the present generation throughout the country.

Our people long for peace, but they also need food, medicine, fuel and other basic items. Our country is rich in natural resources and its people are hard-working, but the monster of war has limited the possibility of their proper utilization. Once peace is restored, there is no doubt that large-scale resources will be diverted from the war budget towards meeting the needs of the people and exploiting our natural wealth to ensure their prosperity. However, we cannot and, surely, must not wait for peace to come to solve some of those problems, such as the severe shortage of fuel and food supplies.

Afghans are patriotic, religious, theistic, brave, proud and peace-loving people. They wish to strengthen friendly ties and all-out cooperation with their neighbours and all countries of the world on the basis of the recognized principles of international law. In so far as they devotedly safeguard their national interests and honour, they also pay tribute to the rights and legitimate interests of other nations. They want to live in peace among themselves and with all nations of the world and to be the enemy of none and the friend of all.

Our country is in favour of having good relations with Pakistan, as a co-religionist, neighbouring country. We are always prepared to negotiate with Pakistan about ways and means to invigorate our friendship and bilateral cooperation. I fully believe that this very aim is in conformity with the interests of the two nations and the whole region.

(Mr. Khaliqyar, Afghanistan)

We have historic common ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran. The common language, culture, customs and our common religion have strongly linked us to each other. We have wide-ranging opportunities to expand mutual cooperation. We recognize Iran as a big country with influence over the changes taking place in the region. We wish to promote and develop our friendship and our mutually beneficial cooperation with Iran.

We also regard the People's Republic of China as a major neighbouring country; in the past and in the present, China, as a friend of the people of Afghanistan, has greatly contributed to our country's economic projects, such as the Parwan irrigation project, the Bagrami textile mill in Kabul, the 300-bed hospital in Kandahar and so forth. Today, past limitations in Sino-Afghan relations have been done away with. Our journalists, sportsmen and private entrepreneurs travel to China, and a noticeable improvement is evident in the two countries' relations, which is according to the wishes of the two nations.

We are sure of our ever-growing, traditionally friendly relations and economic cooperation with the the Soviet Union and the Republic of India, which have always assisted the Republic of Afghanistan in its efforts to achieve peace in the country.

The people of Afghanistan attach special importance to their relations with Saudi Arabia, as a big Islamic country where the Muslim sanctuary is located. The house of the Lord and the holy shrines of Mohammed, the great prophet of Islam, and of the Caliphs have drawn our Muslim people to that land for hundreds of years. We wish that our Saudi brothers would not only respond favorably to our call for a normalization of relations with Afghanistan but

(Mr. Khaliqyar, Afghanistan)

would also make use of their moral influence and significant role in order to restore peace in Afghanistan.

The peoples of Afghanistan and Turkey are traditional friends to one another. We hold in high esteem the memory of our genuine cooperation with Turkey through tens of educational, cultural, medical and defence projects. The Government of Afghanistan will make use of every opportunity to expand and further develop friendship and cooperation between the two countries.

Our ties with Syria have always been friendly, and the efforts of the Governments of the two countries to extend bilateral cooperation are convincingly increasing.

Kuwait, which has recently put a tormenting page in history behind it, has always been a friend of our country. We are seeking necessary avenues to promote our mutually beneficial cooperation with Kuwait.

Long ties of friendship and cooperation closely link the peoples of Afghanistan and Egypt. I believe that our endeavours to strengthen and develop the traditional relations between the two countries will achieve a desirable outcome.

Afghanistan strives equally strongly to develop good relations and mutually beneficial cooperation with other Arab and Islamic countries, relying upon the principles of the international law.

(Mr. Khaliqyar, Afghanistan)

Normal and friendly relations with the United States of America are in our national interests and are very important to our people. The many manifestations of our multilateral economic, scientific and cultural cooperation with the United States include such projects as Helmand valley, the Kabul-Kandahar highway, Kabul university establishments, the academic affiliation system and the training of hundreds of Afghans in specialized fields in United States educational institutions. These are well appreciated in our country and evince the solid and friendly relations between our peoples. We hope the United States Administration will take the hand of cordial friendship that we have extended and will move towards the normalization of relations with Afghanistan.

Switzerland, to which our country has been compared by some tourists and historians, has had a special interest in the destiny of the people of Afghanistan. The latest instance of this was the innovative visit of Mr. Klaus Jacobi, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of that country, to Kabul and the surrounding region. This visit was aimed at helping to establish understanding and peace between the conflicting parties. We are sincerely grateful to Switzerland for this bold act.

We also desire ever broader relations with the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Austria and other West European countries, as well as Canada and the United States. Each of these countries has assumed a noteworthy role in the socio-economic development of Afghanistan, which is recalled by our people with deep gratitude.

Even during the very hard years of war, we maintained commercial relations with Japan, the Republic of Korea and other countries of South-East Asia and the Far East. The restoration of peace establishes more propitious circumstances for the association of Afghanistan with the economic foundations

(Mr. Khaliqyar, Afghanistan)

of this region. In line with its economic policy, the Republic of Afghanistan reiterates its demand for membership in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation and is prepared to set up suitable economic associations with neighbouring countries.

Attracting foreign investment constitutes an integral part of my Government's economic policy. Afghanistan stands ready to provide legally guaranteed facilities for foreign investments from countries throughout the world, without discrimination, in such varied fields as banking, air and land transportation, industry, construction, communications, the exploration and extraction of mines, the establishment of agricultural and livestock farms, irrigation systems, energy-generating complexes, and so on.

As one of the founders of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the Republic of Afghanistan wishes further to promote and strengthen its friendly relations with the members of the Movement and OIC, and will strive to achieve their common ideals. Together with other countries, we will make our contribution to increasing and upgrading the role of the United Nations in settling global issues and safeguarding world peace, as well as implementing the objectives of the United Nations Charter to the benefit of all mankind.

Afghanistan is a peace-loving, non-aligned and neutral country and does not intend to pose any threat to, or commit any aggression against, any other country. We emphasize that Afghanistan is genuinely and earnestly striving for good relations with all countries, States and Governments on the basis of mutual respect and interests, and to live in peace and tranquillity with all nations of the world.

(Mr. Khaliqyar, Afghanistan)

This is our sincere message to all Afghans and from all Afghans to the entire world. The Afghan nation has gained worthiness, respect and honour for its struggle for peace and justice. Any feelings of solidarity and sympathy towards this free-born and independent nation should be applied towards ending its agonies and not to perpetuating and heightening its miseries and pains.

I ask the representatives of free and independent nations to extend their cooperation and earnest solidarity in assistance, and I pray God Almighty to grant happiness to the Afghans and peace and prosperity to all humanity.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the Republic of Afghanistan for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Fazl-Ul-Haq Khaliqyar, Prime Minister of the Republic of Afghanistan, was escorted from the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT: We have heard the last speaker in the general debate for this meeting.

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

May I remind members that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. SUTRESNA (Indonesia): The Foreign Minister of Portugal, in his statement this afternoon, again found the time - thus abusing the precious time of the Assembly - to engage in unfounded allegations and distortions of facts concerning the process of the exercise of the right of self-determination by the people of East Timor.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

What the Foreign Minister should not forget is that, in August 1975, the Portuguese colonial authorities in Dili, in the most irresponsible manner, simply abandoned East Timor after allowing the situation in that territory to deteriorate to the point of civil war. In fact, after practically instigating civil war by clandestinely turning over its arms and ammunition to one particular political group - the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (FRETILIN) - the Portuguese colonial authorities thereby utterly mishandled the decolonization process. In fact, in so doing, Portugal has in effect relinquished its responsibility as the administering Power, which even FRETILIN underscored at that time by announcing the so-called unilateral declaration of independence.

Hence, it should come as no surprise that the East Timorese people considers itself no longer bound to any decolonization covenant with the erstwhile colonial Power and assumes its own legitimate right and responsibility to determine its own destiny. This it did by choosing independence through integration with Indonesia in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and principles 6, 8 and 9 of resolution 1541 (XV), in conformity with its traditional democratic practices.

In August and November 1975, Indonesia was not even involved in the tragic events unfolding in East Timor, although it had to bear the consequences of turmoil in the form of 40,000 East Timorese refugees fleeing across the border into West Timor. Indonesia's subsequent involvement in East Timor can therefore be seen to be as responding as correctly and in as restrained a manner as possible to the chaotic and tragic circumstances which

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

unfortunately accompanied the decolonization process in East Timor. Far from annexing, invading or occupying another independent State, Indonesia's role in East Timor was precisely one of contributing to the process of decolonization, inter alia by helping to ensure that, in its essence and realization, the democratically expressed will of the majority of the people not be overruled by the armed terror and unilateral imposition of a ruthless minority.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

It is absurd to describe the prevailing situation during the past 15 years in East Timor, as the Foreign Minister of Portugal did, as one of widespread repression and use of force. On the contrary, the people of East Timor, together with their sisters and brothers of other Provinces of Indonesia, have now engaged themselves in development, covering all aspects of their lives. After 400 years of colonial Portuguese oppression, the people of East Timor are now enjoying the fruits of freedom and development.

One's statements should be judged by one's deeds. The Foreign Minister of Portugal spoke about the planned visit of the Portuguese parliamentary delegation to East Timor. In fact, the two Governments have just agreed on the terms of reference and modalities for that visit, as contained in the Secretary-General's report (A/46/456). Representatives may wonder whether Portugal is really sincere in seeking a comprehensive, internationally acceptable settlement of the question of East Timor at the United Nations. Now that we have reached this delicate stage in the process, we would have expected that Portugal would also display some restraint so as not to poison the atmosphere of confidence-building, which would undoubtedly greatly facilitate the laudable efforts of our esteemed Secretary-General.

Mr. QUARTIN SANTOS (Portugal): I wish to make some brief remarks about what the representative of Indonesia has just said about part of the speech delivered this afternoon by the Foreign Minister of Portugal - that concerning the question of East Timor.

The representative of Indonesia started by referring to mishandling of the decolonization process in 1975. We have already stated several times here and in other forums that Portugal does not reject its share of responsibility for the events that took place in 1975. We doubt that others can say the same.

(Mr. Quartin Santos, Portugal)

I wish also to state that what we believe is at stake at this juncture is not who is to blame for what happened in 1975, but how to uphold the inalienable rights of the people of East Timor, including the rights they have under the Charter and relevant United Nations resolutions. We consider it futile and fruitless in 1991 to hark back to who is really to blame for what happened in 1975, when those rights are still at stake and the problem still exists.

With regard to the accusation of widespread repression and use of force, which the representative of Indonesia describes as being baseless, I would merely recall that the Indonesian-appointed Governor of East Timor, Mr. Mario Carrascalão, has said that at least 100,000 people were killed between 1975 and 1985 as a result of famine and violence which spread over the Territory during those years. I also recall numerous statements, texts and testimony in various forums on various occasions, from such authoritative sources as Amnesty International and other international humanitarian organizations.

Finally, the representative of Indonesia referred to the planned parliamentary delegation visit agreed by the two Governments. We sincerely hope that that visit will lead to a fostering of the process of dialogue engaged in under the auspices of the Secretary-General with a view to achieving a just, comprehensive, internationally agreed settlement of the question. But Portugal cannot be expected to remain silent concerning the facts and the situation prevailing in East Timor. We believe - and this is a firm commitment of my Government - that the best way to cooperate with the Secretary-General in bringing this process to an end is by complying with the appropriate resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council,

(Mr. Quartin Santos, Portugal)

resolutions such as Security Council resolutions 384 (1975) and 389 (1976), which Indonesia has yet to comply with.

Mr. SUTRESNA (Indonesia): I should like to say a few words in response to what the representative of Portugal has just said.

Yes, it is true that Portugal abandoned the Territory irresponsibly in 1975, and I could not agree more with the representative of Portugal that we should not put the blame on anyone at this stage. But it should be recalled that the situation we face now is a result of the irresponsible way in which the Portuguese abandoned the Territory and mishandled the decolonization process in East Timor.

Secondly, Indonesia also sincerely hopes - this has already been stated and continues to be Indonesia's position - that the visit of the parliamentary delegation to East Timor will facilitate finding a comprehensive and internationally acceptable settlement of the question of East Timor at the United Nations. The point I was trying to make was: Now that we have agreed to the visit we should restrain ourselves. Instead of launching attacks and indulging in baseless allegations and accusations, why do we not restrain ourselves and try to build confidence between us, so that both sides are establishing an atmosphere of confidence, in order that the objective of the visit can be achieved in a manner conducive to the attainment of an internationally acceptable settlement.

Mr. QUARTIN SANTOS (Portugal): The representative of Indonesia has again spoken about an "abandonment" by the Portuguese authorities in August 1975. Although we do not want to engage in any controversy today about what happened then, in view of what is at stake I should like to remind the Assembly that as late as 3 November 1975, after a meeting between the Foreign

(Mr. Quartin Santos, Portugal)

Ministers of Indonesia and Portugal, Indonesia recognized that the responsibility for carrying out the decolonization process was still Portugal's.

(Mr. Quartin Santos, Portugal)

I should like also to state that my Government shares with the Indonesian Government the hope that the visit to be undertaken soon will facilitate also the efforts towards the achievement of a just and comprehensive international settlement on the question of East Timor. It is still a question that refers to a Non-Self-Governing Territory included in the agenda of this Assembly, that of the Special Committee of 24 and that of the Security Council, and a question that needs speedy resolution and settlement, with due respect for the legitimate rights of the population concerned.

The meeting rose at 7.50 p.m.